

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
September 5, 2024

NOYO HARBOR MARINA REDEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Project No. 24-032-01
Project Manager: Fanny Yang

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$750,000 to the Noyo Harbor District to undertake the Noyo Harbor Marina Redevelopment Planning Project which consists of conducting community engagement and a planning study; and preparing 60% designs, permit applications, and California Environmental Quality Act documents for the redevelopment of Noyo Harbor Marina in Mendocino County.

LOCATION: Noyo Harbor, Fort Bragg, Mendocino County

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)
Exhibit 2: [Project Photos](#)
Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)
-

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution and findings.

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) to the Noyo Harbor District (“the grantee”) to undertake the Noyo Harbor Marina Redevelopment Planning Project which consists of conducting community engagement and a planning study; and preparing 60% designs, permit applications, and California Environmental Quality Act documents for the redevelopment of Noyo Harbor Marina in Mendocino County.

Prior to commencement of the project, the grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 7 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the restoration of urban waterfront areas.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize a \$750,000 grant to the Noyo Harbor District (District) to undertake the Noyo Harbor Marina Redevelopment Planning Project which consists of conducting community engagement and a planning study; and preparing 60% designs, permit applications, and CEQA documents for the redevelopment of Noyo Harbor marina in Mendocino County (see Exhibit 1).

For more than 72 years, Mendocino County's Noyo Harbor, an all-weather port receiving the most traffic of all ports between Bodega Bay and Humboldt Bay, has played a leading role in the region's commercial and recreational fishing industry. Noyo Harbor is home to one of California's top ten commercial fishing fleets and has a substantial shore-side business cluster at the waterside area serving the fishery and a growing tourism industry. The harbor consistently provides important healthy food sources, enhanced careers, economic community benefits, and serves as an enduring part of the area's cultural heritage. Commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, restaurants, and marine services are dependent on this working harbor, both supporting and relying upon port infrastructure, waterfront businesses, and informed consumers.

Originally constructed in the 1970s, the current marina layout for Noyo Harbor does not promote the best use of the space and the deteriorating infrastructure can no longer support the daily wear and tear that is required for an active facility. In addition, commercial and recreational fishing vessel sizes have increased since the marina was built, and it can no longer accommodate the current fleet. Despite District staff's regular maintenance schedule and budget for repairs, impacts from climate change such as sea level rise and severe winter storm surges are negatively affecting the marina's infrastructure. Replacing the original wooden docks with concrete docks will help secure marina infrastructure in response to such impacts.

Maintaining a working waterfront is a key priority for the region, as identified by the District's Community Sustainability Plan (CSP) funded by the Conservancy in 2017. The purpose of the CSP was to 1) assess the current condition of the harbor's commercial fishing industry and working waterfront in relation to economic, regulatory, social and environmental factors; 2) engage the fishing, business, government and local communities in plan development; and 3) based on the findings and community feedback, recommend priority implementation projects that result in a stable and vibrant commercial and recreational fishing industry and visitor-serving waterfront infrastructure. CSPs are required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery

Conservation and Management Act (MSA) for communities that wish to remain eligible to participate in catch share programs. Developing an MSA-compliant CSP also enables communities to apply for future grants and funding to implement the plan's recommendations from a variety of federal and other sources. A significant amount of public input was used to develop the twelve projects that were identified as priority projects in the CSP. The input was compiled based on surveys, interviews, and stakeholder meeting in the initial phases of the planning process. A total of 12 projects were identified, with the marina redevelopment project being identified as the 5th priority project. Other priority projects that the District is currently implementing include 1) planning and permitting for a fuel dock; 2) installing an icehouse facility with a flake machine to produce ice for keeping caught fish fresh; 3) working with the US Army Corps of Engineers to develop an offshore disposal site for dredged marina sediment; and 4) working with Caltrans to conduct a feasibility study of vehicular circulation patterns at the Harbor to identify safe pedestrian access, parking, and emergency routes. The proposed project will complement these initiatives to create a sustainable and resilient Noyo Harbor.

The proposed project will prepare a planning study, complete up to 60% planning designs for the marina layout and dock replacement, and prepare permit applications and CEQA documentation. These deliverables enable the District to apply for future grants and funding for construction. The vision for the marina redevelopment is to utilize new infrastructure and technology that will be able to withstand intensified storm events and the impacts of climate change. For example, the designs are expected to provide for replacing the current wooden docks with concrete floating docks and replacing crosol pilings with concrete pilings. During the planning process, the District will have an opportunity to update the layout of the marina to better accommodate the needs of the modern fishing and boating industry. The Noyo Harbor Marina Redevelopment Study will allow the District to develop a full understanding of the scope of work required to redevelop and will include input from stakeholders and permitting agencies, including the California Coastal Commission, US Army Corps of Engineers, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California State Lands Commission.

Site Description: Noyo Harbor is located at the mouth of Noyo River in Fort Bragg and has a rich history of commercial fishing, logging, and commerce. The Noyo River supports an anadromous fishery including steelhead trout, coho salmon, and Chinook salmon, all of which are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. The area's fish stocks and forests have sustained the community in Fort Bragg, from the days of the indigenous Pomo people to the current residents, along with a growing tourism industry. Noyo Harbor's primary commercial fisheries include the groundfish trawl, urchin dive, Chinook salmon troll, Dungeness crab, and sablefish and rockfish/lingcod hook and line and trap fisheries. The harbor also has a substantial shore-side business cluster, with approximately 25 businesses at or near the waterside area. There are several fish buyers with hoists and receiving stations, including on-site receiver/processors, a retail fish market and shipbuilding and boat repair facilities. Shore side infrastructure consists of a 256-slip boat basin, service facilities, a work hoist, two launch ramps, parking, and storage areas.

The proposed project will be specifically focused on the marina. Originally constructed in the 1970's, the marina is primarily comprised of wooden docks, steel brackets, crosol covered

pilings and polystyrene floats. There are 9 docks and 266 slips in the marina. There are 191 long term tenants in the marina and 75 slips reserved for seasonal or transient vessels. Of the 191 long term tenants, 100 vessels are commercial fishing vessels and 91 are either recreational fishing vessels or pleasure craft. The majority of seasonal or transient tenants are recreational fishing vessels. In the spring and fall, Noyo Harbor sees a considerable amount of traveling boaters as they transit from the Pacific Northwest, usually from British Columbia or Seattle, Washington to Baja, Mexico.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The District is well positioned to carry out this project. The primary mission of the District is to ensure that the harbor is a viable operational and financial entity, providing fishery support facilities and boating and marine-related opportunities to the public. The District has been successful in the execution of State grants in the past, having managed and navigated grants from the Conservancy, California Office of Emergency Services' Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Division of Boating and Waterways' Salvaged and Abandoned Vessels Grant Program, and the State Lands Commission. District staff will continue to provide long-term management, maintenance, and care of the marina after completion of the proposed project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria, last updated on September 23, 2021, in the following respects:

Selection Criteria

1. Extent to which the project helps the Conservancy accomplish the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Strategic Plan" section below.

2. Project is a good investment of state resources.

The proposed project is a good investment of state resources because 1) it will enhance the sustainability of a regional fishery of statewide importance; 2) it is consistent with the City of Fort Bragg's "Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency and Implementation Plan" funded by the California Coastal Commission as part of the City's Local Coastal Program(LCP) update; and 3) it will contribute to meeting the state's climate resilience and economic sustainability goals as required by the Governor's 30x30 Executive Order.

3. Project benefits will be sustainable or resilient over the project lifespan.

The proposed project benefits will be sustainable and resilient over the project lifespan. The proposed project will not make future climate adaptation more difficult. The proposed project will use best available data on sea level rise in the marina redevelopment planning. The sea level rise data includes insights on other hazards, such as tsunami hazards and coastal flooding. In the permitting process, the proposed project will provide information on how design plans will accommodate and mitigate the negative impacts of sea level rise and climate change. The District has identified potential implementation funding from the U.S. Department of

Transportation’s FY2024 Port Infrastructure Development Program. The District had applied to the FY2023 funding round but was not selected for funding, due to the funders’ concerns with the lack of planning and design documents associated with the project. The proposed project will directly address concerns from potential funders, as it will produce planning and design deliverables to be used for future implementation.

4. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.

The proposed project will deliver multiple benefits such as planning for future impacts of climate change on marina infrastructure, bolstering commercial fishing vessel amenities, and creating opportunities for blue economy growth in the harbor. The redevelopment of the marina is expected to attract new businesses to Noyo Harbor and Fort Bragg, bringing jobs and industry with them, which will provide new opportunities for local people, including commercial fishermen, as traditional resource extractive industries of logging and fishing decrease along the Mendocino coast.

5. Project planned with meaningful community engagement and broad community support.

The proposed project was planned with significant public input to develop priority projects for the Harbor. The input was compiled based on surveys, interviews, and stakeholder meetings in the initial phases of the planning process. A total of 12 projects were identified, with the marina redevelopment project being identified as the 5th priority project; the top four priority projects are in process separately, as discussed above. The proposed project will include meaningful community engagement, engaging with local and regional communities in a public co-visioning process for the marina redevelopment. This will be achieved through stakeholder engagement meetings, presentations to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and the Fort Bragg City Council. Utilizing both the current Blue Economy effort led by the Noyo Ocean Collective and the City of Fort Bragg’s Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency, and Implementation Plan, the proposed project will have multiple opportunities to engage with other stakeholders such as the City of Fort Bragg, West Business Development Center, Mendocino-Lake Community College, and the Noyo Center for Marine Science on how the marina redevelopment can be a part of the blue economy discussion.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$750,000
Project Total	\$750,000

Conservancy funds are expected to derive from a Fiscal Year 2022/2023 appropriation of Greenhouse Gas Reduction funds (GGRF) to the Conservancy for the urgent sea level rise adaptation and coastal resilience needs (Budget Act of 2022, as amended by the Budget Act of 2023, SB 101, Chapter 12, Statutes of 2023). The proposed project will incorporate sea level rise, potential tsunami inundation, and climate change impact analyses into the 60% designs for redevelopment of the marina at Noyo Harbor.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Investment Plan and Communities Revitalization Act (Health and Safety Code (HSC) Sections 39710 – 39723) requires that GGRF funds be used to (1) facilitate the achievement of reductions of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (HSC Sections 38500 et seq), and (2) to the extent feasible, achieve other co-benefits, such as maximizing economic, environmental and public health benefits and directing investment to disadvantaged communities (HSC 39712(b)). The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 sets forth (among other things) certain GGRF funding priorities (HSC Section 38590.1).

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has adopted guidelines that establish program goals that agencies must achieve with their GGRF funds.

Consistent with the CARB 2018 Funding Guidelines, the Noyo Harbor Marina Redevelopment Planning Project will help the Conservancy meet its GGRF program goals because the project will:

- Facilitate GHG emission reductions (which includes carbon sequestration) and further the purposes of AB 32 and related statutes;
- Benefit priority populations, with a focus on maximizing disadvantaged community benefits;
- Maximize economic, environmental, and public health co-benefits to the State;
- Foster job creation;
- Leverage funds to provide multiple benefits and to maximize benefits.

The proposed project will meet these goals by contributing to a more resilient marina for the fishing communities to dock their vessels, thereby decreasing the need for boaters to expend fuel to travel from nearby ports to Fort Bragg and the Mendocino region. By planning for redevelopment of the marina to be resilient to sea-level rise, intense storms, and tsunamis, the project will enable avoidance of flooding and infrastructure damage and the resulting GHG emissions from remediation and rebuilding. The proposed project will plan for improving the overall marina infrastructure for commercial and recreational use, which will foster job creation for the fishing industry and blue economy initiatives. This will help result in a more stable and vibrant commercial and recreational fishing industry, with visitor-serving waterfront infrastructure at Noyo Harbor.

Unless specifically identified as “Required Match,” the other sources of funding and in-kind contributions described above are estimates. The Conservancy does not typically require matching funds or in-kind services, nor does it require documentation of expenditures from other funders or of in-kind services. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete a project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 7 (Sections 31300-31316) regarding the restoration of urban waterfronts, as follows:

Section 31300 states that California's urban waterfronts are in need of restoration in order to be the vital economic and cultural component of the community they once were, and that the encouragement of planned private sector development in these areas is a benefit to citizens of the state as well as the local citizenry in affected urban waterfront areas. The proposed project will facilitate the revitalization of Noyo Harbor.

Section 31307 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to public agencies for the restoration of urban coastal waterfront areas. The proposed grant will enable the District to enhance the economic vitality of the area's fisheries and waterfront facilities.

The proposed project is also consistent with Section 31316, which authorizes the Conservancy to undertake projects and award grants for activities that are compatible with the preservation, restoration or enhancement of ocean, coastal or watershed resources within urban coastal watershed areas. Projects or activities may include, but are not limited to, exhibits or events emphasizing coastal, watershed, or ocean resource education, or maritime history, or the development of amenities and infrastructure. The proposed project will complete planning and designs for improving the resilience of Noyo Harbor marina infrastructure and amenities.

Finally, in selecting projects for funding, the Conservancy is required by Section 31305 to support projects that promote excellence in design and which exhibit innovation in sensitively integrating built features into the natural coastal environment. The proposed project will achieve these objectives in the marina improvements as it will enable the District to incorporate sea level rise vulnerabilities into the planning and designs. Further, an environmentally sensitive interface between Noyo Harbor and the natural coastal environment is a key component of all the CSP's recommendations to facilitate a resilient commercial fishing industry and marine-related recreation and tourism.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN](#):

Consistent with **Goal 1.1 Commit Funding to Benefit Systemically Excluded Communities**, the proposed project will invest in the sustainability and resiliency of the Noyo Harbor marina for fishing and recreational use by disadvantaged communities in Fort Bragg and the Mendocino region. Most employment opportunities are in service, hospitality, and fishing, and the median household income is less than 60% of the statewide average, classifying the city as a severely disadvantaged community.

Consistent with **Goal 1.3 Support Meaningful Engagement by Systemically Excluded Communities**, the proposed project will include meaningful community engagement, engaging with local and regional communities in a public co-visioning process for the marina redevelopment, through stakeholder engagement meetings, presentations to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and the Fort Bragg City Council.

Consistent with **Goal 2.6 Piers and Waterfront**, the proposed project will support planning and design for the revitalization of Noyo Harbor through multi-benefit coastal resilience improvements for the marina, including dock replacements and removal of derelict infrastructure.

Consistent with **Goal 4.1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Projects**, the proposed project will complete planning and engineering designs to improve the Noyo Harbor marina's resilience to climate change impacts such as intense storms and sea level rise.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded. The proposed planning project consists of preparing 60% design plans, conducting CEQA review, and preparing permit applications. Upon approval of the project, Conservancy staff will file a Notice of Exemption.