

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation

September 17, 2026

EXPLORE THE COAST GRANT PROGRAM – 2026-2027

Project No. 26-028-01

Project Managers: Chere Erickson, Olivia VanDamme, Christy Kehoe

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Consideration and authorization to disburse up to \$964,535 to eleven nonprofit organizations and two school districts for thirteen projects under the Explore the Coast program that facilitate and enhance the public's opportunities to explore the California coast and San Francisco Bay shoreline.

LOCATION: Participants are drawn from throughout the State of California and visit various locations along the California coast and the San Francisco Bay shoreline (see Exhibit 1).

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Advisory Board Members](#)

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 ("Conservancy") hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed nine hundred sixty-four thousand five hundred thirty-five dollars (\$964,535) to eleven nonprofit organizations and two school districts for thirteen projects under the Explore the Coast program that facilitate and enhance the public's opportunities to explore the California coast and San Francisco Bay shoreline (the "projects"). The Executive Officer of the Conservancy may authorize modifications to one or more of the thirteen projects if the modified projects continue to promote the goal of facilitating and enhancing the public's opportunities to explore the California coast and San Francisco Bay shoreline. The thirteen projects are as follows (presented in alphabetical order by the grantee's name):

1. **Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT):** Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to provide approximately 76 Amah Mutsun Tribal Band members (youth, young adults, and their families) from the Central Valley and Central Coast with immersive cultural, ecological, and recreational activities to reconnect with their ancestral coastal homelands and traditional

ecological knowledge. AMLT will provide one multi-day overnight camping trip in the Monterey Bay area for approximately 76 participants and one multi-week internship program for approximately 16 interns.

2. **Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP):** One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to provide approximately 130 individuals with physical and vision disabilities from the San Francisco Bay Area with educational coastal experiences, such as adaptive cycling, adaptive kayaking, and guided coastal exploration. Guided activities will be docent-led, allowing participants to learn about the ecosystems they explore. BORP will provide approximately 30 coastal adaptive outings in the San Francisco Bay.
3. **Camp Phoenix:** Ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000) to provide approximately 280 low-income youth from East Oakland with educational and exploratory coastal experiences, such as paddleboarding, kayaking, camping, beach exploration, meditation, and connection to each other and the coast through guided activities. Camp Phoenix will teach youth outdoor skills and about local coastal ecosystems. Camp Phoenix will provide approximately 18 coastal field trips and 2 overnight trips in multiple sites along the San Francisco Bay shoreline and outer coast.
4. **Color the Water:** Forty-four thousand eight hundred thirty-five dollars (\$44,835) to provide approximately 130 participants, including youth and young adults, from the greater Los Angeles area and surrounding inland communities with coastal activities, such as developing surfing skills, ocean safety knowledge, and personal confidence designed to encourage and support Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) people. Color the Water will provide approximately 50 total surf lessons with a portion being individual and a portion being in small groups, 20 bi-weekly community surf sessions, and 10 monthly coastal meetups.
5. **EmpowHer Institute:** One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to provide approximately 230 girls, ages 12 to 18, from Title 1 schools in South Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and the Antelope Valley with coastal activities, such as tide pooling, beach excursions, sailing, SCUBA certification, and SCUBA diving experiences throughout Los Angeles beaches and on Santa Catalina Island. EmpowHer Institute will provide approximately 10 beach day trips, a multi-week camp, and 3 overnight SCUBA diving trips for newly certified divers.
6. **Family Dynamics Resource Center:** Seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) to provide approximately 168 underserved youth from Shasta and Siskiyou Counties with coastal activities, such as California Native American teachings and stewardship, kayaking, exploring tide pools, and hiking coastal trails. The Family Dynamics Resource Center will provide approximately eight 4-day, overnight camping trips to coastal locations, such as Redwood National and State Parks, Sue-meg State Park, Humboldt Lagoons State Park, and Gold Bluffs Beach.
7. **Groundswell Community Project:** Sixty-three thousand five hundred dollars (\$63,500) to provide approximately 32 low-income, trauma-impacted individuals from San Diego County with grounding coastal activities, ocean safety lessons, ocean conservation lessons, and beginner surf instruction. The Groundswell Community Project will provide approximately four 8-week surf therapy cohorts at Dog Beach in Ocean Beach.

8. **Imperial County Office of Education:** Fifty-six thousand five hundred dollars (\$56,500) to provide approximately 150 justice-impacted students in the Imperial County Alternative Education program with educational and exploratory coastal activities, such as sailing, paddleboarding, kayaking, hiking, and biking along the coast. Throughout each activity, students will learn about ocean safety, marine life, and the impact of humans on marine ecosystems. Imperial County Office of Education will provide approximately 5 coastal excursions to various beaches throughout San Diego County.
9. **Oakland Unified School District:** One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to provide approximately 1,000 Oakland Unified School District middle and high school students from six Title-1 Schools with coastal activities, such as guided hikes and beach exploration, wildlife viewing, community building exercises, and leadership exercises. Oakland Unified School District will provide a combination of approximately 25 day and overnight trips to locations in Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz Counties.
10. **Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project:** One hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to provide approximately 1,200 people comprising primarily of people with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disabilities, as well as participants from low-income households in Southern California counties with adaptive coastal activities, such as supported outrigger paddling experiences and onshore environmental-learning and sensory-focused experiences. The Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project will provide approximately 50 events primarily at the Newport Aquatic Center in Newport Beach as well as other canoe club sites across the South Coast.
11. **People's Self-Help Housing Corporation:** Thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) to provide approximately 250 low-income participants (chaperones, students, and their families) from San Luis Obispo County's affordable, supportive housing properties with coastal activities, such as bilingual tidepool exploration, unstructured beach play, gentle beach walks, community picnics, restorative rest time, and bilingual reflection circles with embedded cultural storytelling. People's Self-Help Housing Corporation will provide 6 beach trips to various Central Coast beaches.
12. **Refugee Enrichment and Development Association (REDA):** Ninety-nine thousand seven hundred dollars (\$99,700) to provide approximately 198 low-income refugee families from the Sacramento area with coastal activities, such as camping, singing and storytelling, stargazing, nature journaling, and hiking to build confidence. REDA will provide approximately four 3-day overnight retreats serving approximately 22 participants each and two 1-day coastal trips serving 50 participants each to various Marin and Mendocino County beaches.
13. **Ventana Wildlife Society:** Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to provide approximately 180 low-income people (youth, young adults, and their family members) from East Salinas with weekly afterschool experiences at Central Coast coastal parks, such as hiking, observing wildlife, engaging in citizen science, and creating art. The Ventana Wildlife Society will provide approximately 96 weekly afterschool coastal trips, 8 single day family trips, and 4 overnight family campouts at Andrew Molera State Park.

Prior to commencement of each project, the specific grantee for the project 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.
3. A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding.
4. Evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
5. Any other applicable agreements determined necessary for the project by the Conservancy's Executive Officer.

Findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapters 4.5 and 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the resource and recreational goals in the San Francisco Bay Area (Chapter 4.5), and the establishment of a system of public accessways to and along the California coast (Chapter 9).
2. The proposed projects are consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria.
3. The 11 proposed nonprofit organizations are each organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize \$964,535 to 11 nonprofit organizations and 2 school districts for 13 projects that facilitate and enhance the public's opportunities to explore the coast of California and San Francisco Bay shoreline under the Conservancy's Explore the Coast (ETC) grant program.

The purpose of the ETC grant program is to provide coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast (ETC Priority Communities). ETC Priority Communities include, but are not limited to, lower-income individuals and households, people with disabilities, people of color, indigenous communities, immigrant communities, foster youth, and other historically excluded communities who face societal challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast. The proposed projects meet one or more of the following priorities: provide an enjoyable experience at the coast and reduce economic, physical, operational, or societal barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

The ETC grant program includes projects that enhance visitors' ability to learn about natural, recreational, cultural, and historical resources of the California coast and San Francisco Bay shorelines. A variety of activities and programmatic services are eligible for funding under the ETC grant program, such as providing select transportation, reducing the economic cost of coastal program attendance, providing coastal experiences for people with disabilities, and overnight coastal experiences for participants. This year's ETC grant program solicitation was released in early November 2025; webinars and virtual technical assistance sessions were held in December 2025 and January 2026 to provide further guidance for potential applicants on the program, application, and administrative requirements. Additional technical assistance was available upon request and Conservancy project staff helped several organizations prior to the application deadline.

In recommending projects to the Conservancy, staff aim to equitably distribute this funding and maximize the impact of every dollar spent. To better achieve these goals, Conservancy staff created an Explore the Coast Advisory Board in 2019. Advisory Board members serve a term of two years and may be invited to continue their service for a second term. This year's Advisory Board cohort represents various regions of the State with backgrounds in environmental justice, coastal access issues, tribal advocacy, disability rights, foundation work and funding, grant program administration, and environmental education (Exhibit 2). The Advisory Board advises staff on the application process, application review, and ongoing management of the grant program. The Advisory Board's participation with staff in the review and selection of projects advances equity by giving the communities served by the program an opportunity to provide direct input on their needs and the types of projects that will best serve them.

This year, the Conservancy received 179 applications, requesting over \$12,334,972 in Conservancy funding. Staff reviewed 179 applications and forwarded 43 applications to the Advisory Board. Each of the 43 applications was reviewed by at least 3 Advisory Board members. In May 2026, the Advisory Board met to discuss and recommend applications to staff. Following this meeting, staff finalized the list of 13 recommended projects with an average award size of \$73,810.

Staff estimates that the proposed 2026-2027 ETC grant program will provide approximately 6,736 participant experiences and engage more than 3,988 unique participants through the proposed projects. Of these people, project partners estimate that the program will serve approximately 3,009 low-income Californians, 3,702 people of color, 211 youth who are houseless or in foster care, approximately 1,452 people for whom English is not their first language, and at least 1,398 people with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disabilities.

Participant numbers and trip numbers stated in the project summaries are approximate and may vary due to estimated costs, changes to better serve the participant community, and other programmatic reasons. Additionally, unexpected circumstances, such as beach closures or adverse weather, may necessitate project changes. For this reason, the recommended resolution includes authority for the Executive Officer to approve changes that are consistent with the purpose of the ETC grant program.

Staff recommends funding the following 13 projects for the 2026-2027 ETC grants program. The projects are arranged alphabetically by applicant. Each individual project summary includes the grant applicant; project name; recommended funding amount; geographic region of the participants; a brief project description; and information on the consistency of the proposed project with the Conservancy's proposed funding source, enabling legislation, and Strategic Plan. In addition, each project summary provides relevant information for project compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

AMAH MUTSUN LAND TRUST

\$50,000

AMLT Native Stewards Internship & Coastal Stewardship Summer Camp

San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento Valley and Sierras, San Joaquin Valley, South Coast

As part of the project, the Amah Mutsun Land Trust will provide accessible, culturally grounded coastal experiences for approximately 76 Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Members (youth, young adults, and their families). Participants will come primarily from California's Central Valley and Central Coast regions. Participants will reconnect with their ancestral coastal homelands through immersive cultural, ecological, and recreational activities. The project includes a 5-day, overnight coastal camping trip in the Monterey Bay area for approximately 76 Tribal Band Members and a 5-week residential internship for approximately 16 interns. Each intern will have the opportunity to attend the 5-day overnight camping trip in addition to the 5-week internship. The overnight coastal camping trip will include activities such as tide pooling, kayaking, bird watching, habitat restoration, and beach exploration. The internship will allow high-school and college-aged Tribal members to participate in ecological and cultural learning, exploration of coastal ecosystems, and restoration of coastal ecosystems. Internship activities may include tidepooling, kayaking, bird watching, and beach exploration in and around Elkhorn Slough. The focus of both of these experiences is coastal enjoyment, healing, and cultural reconnection alongside Tribal peers, elders, and mentors. The project will integrate traditional ecological knowledge with contemporary science, offer hands-on learning, storytelling, and intergenerational exchange that will foster a deeper understanding of coastal ecosystems and support long-term stewardship and connection to the land. The goal is for all participants to leave with ecological knowledge, stronger cultural identity, and leadership skills.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Watsonville Slough, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, Moss Landing Beach, Marine Labs and Harbor, University of California Santa Cruz Coastal Campus, Seymour Discovery Center, Younger Lagoon Reserve, and State Parks and Beaches (Sunset, Palm, Zmudowski, Moss Landing, Salinas River).

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.

- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

BAY AREA OUTREACH AND RECREATION PROGRAM (BORP)

\$100,000

Disability Outdoor Coastal Access Project

San Francisco Bay Area

As part of the project, BORP will make it possible for approximately 130 people with a wide range of physical and vision disabilities to experience coastal resources and recreation. The project will facilitate a variety of financially and physically accessible coastal outings that combine accessible transportation, adaptive equipment, community building, and environmental education. BORP will deliver approximately 30 fully supported coastal outings across three different trip types: exploratory coastal outings to beaches from San Francisco to Monterey; adaptive cycling outings; and adaptive kayaking outings. Each participant will have the opportunity to attend approximately 1-2 of the 30 trips. A portion of the trips will be specifically for youth participants. All outings will include a docent or naturalist-led component that emphasizes sensory-rich, accessible environmental education. Across all outings, BORP will emphasize and facilitate peer connection, reflection, and independence building, with the goal of empowering participants to continue to explore the coast in the future, including independently. The goal of the project is to ensure that participants not only go to the coast but can actively engage with these special environments in ways that are dignified, joyful, inclusive, and ultimately transformative.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Ocean Beach in San Francisco, Pacifica Rockaway Beach, Pacifica, Mori Point, Half Moon Bay, El Granada Coast Trail, Half Moon Bay, Francis State Beach, Bodega Bay, Doran Beach in Santa Cruz, Lighthouse Field State Beach, Natural Bridges State Beach, Ano Nuevo State Park, Elephant Seal Tour in Pacific Grove, Pacific Grove Coastal Recreation Trail, Asilomar State Beach, Great Highway, Sunset Dunes Park, Elkhorn Slough, and Tomales Bay. The proposed project is consistent with the use of California Environmental License Plate Funds because it involves environmental education as described above.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

CAMP PHOENIX

\$90,000

Camp Phoenix: Coast Belonging Project

San Francisco Bay Area

As part of the project, Camp Phoenix will make it possible for approximately 280 low-income youth from East Oakland neighborhoods to attend coastal field trips and overnight trips to the San Francisco Bay shoreline and outer coast. The participants are anticipated to be predominantly Black and Latinx. Camp Phoenix will host approximately 18 coastal field trips and approximately 2 overnight coastal trips. Each participant will have the opportunity to attend one of the 20 events. The project will provide door-to-door transportation for participants to enjoy educational and exploratory coastal activities, such as camping, ferry rides, paddle boarding, and beach exploration at China Camp State Park, Angel Island State Park, Crown Memorial State Beach, Alameda shoreline, Point Reyes National Seashore, Rodeo Beach, Gray Whale Cove, and more. Throughout the project, Camp Phoenix will teach participants outdoor skills, such as orienteering, and about local coastal ecosystems. The outings will include facilitated group activities, such as an opening “Circle of Trust,” group guided meditations, a closing “Shout-Out Circle” to celebrate personal breakthroughs and time for reflection. There will also be community building games, trained adult staff to support group conversations about collective experiences of city living, and trauma informed practices in facilitation. The program’s goal, through intentionally designed repeat experiences for participants, is to find healing and belonging along the coast.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of California Environmental License Plate Funds because it involves environmental education as described in the project summary above. The proposed project is also consistent with use of the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation grant awarded to the Conservancy in 2025 for the purpose of supporting the ETC grant program.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences and Chapter 4.5 (San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program) because it improves public access to, within, and around the bay by providing Bay Area experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

COLOR THE WATER

\$44,835

Surf Support Circles

**South Coast, Inland Southern
California and Deserts**

As part of the project, Color the Water will provide accessible, culturally responsive coastal experiences for approximately 130 participants, including youth and young adults, from the greater Los Angeles area and surrounding inland communities. The goal of Color the Water programs is to encourage and support Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) surfers. Color the Water will provide approximately 50 total surf lessons (with a mix of individual and small group lessons), 20 bi-weekly community surf sessions, and 10 monthly coastal meetups. Participants will have the opportunity to attend multiple lessons, surf sessions and meetups. As part of the surf instruction, participants will receive feedback by reviewing video clips and photographs taken during their lessons. Participants will engage with and build lasting relationships to Southern California beaches while developing surfing skills, ocean safety knowledge, and personal confidence. While the focus of these activities is joy, healing, and connection through surfing alongside peers and mentors, participants will also strengthen their independence, self-expression, and leadership abilities. Participants will be taught the origins of wave riding from West Africa, Peru, and Polynesia to connect them to BIPOC history and their own identities. Instructors will provide surfers with supportive feedback that focuses on body positivity, self-love, and acceptance and facilitate support circles and one-on-one sessions. This project also incorporates environmental and cultural education through place-based learning, storytelling, and exploration of coastal history, fostering a deeper appreciation for ocean ecosystems and participants' connections to them.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of beaches in Southern California, including Bruce's Beach Manhattan Beach, Inkwell Santa Monica Beach, Dockweiler Beach, and Venice Beach California State Beaches, including Point Dume State Beach, Doheny State Beach, and San Onofre State Beach.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

EMPOWHER INSTITUTE

\$100,000

EmpowHer Coastal Access

South Coast

As part of the project, the EmpowHer Institute will serve approximately 230 youth, ages 12 to 18, from Title 1 schools in South Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and the Antelope Valley. The project is designed to serve girls, and participants are expected to be predominantly Black and Latina. EmpowHer Institute will provide approximately one 5-week camp, 3 overnight SCUBA diving trips for newly certified divers, and 10 beach days. Youth will apply to participate in the multi-week camp and 3 overnight SCUBA trips, and 30 participants will be selected. The multi-week camp consists of 2 parts: (1) an approximately 3-week intensive Social Justice Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) camp, focused on marine biology education and coastal immersion, that includes 4 beach days and one 2-night camp on USC Wrigley Marine Institute on Catalina Island; and (2) the final two-week intensive camp component serves 12 of the 30 participants selected from session 1 based on demonstrated readiness and interest and includes 4 sailing days and a weeklong SCUBA instruction course with one 1-night SCUBA trip to Catalina Island. The project will end with 3 overnight SCUBA dive trips, spaced out over the course of a year, for the participants that completed their SCUBA certifications. These camp sessions allow participants to practice using leadership skills, and develop a strong sense of belonging in coastal and marine spaces. Approximately 200 applicants that were not selected for the camp sessions will have the opportunity to attend one beach day each. For the beach days, individuals will participate in beach activities, such as such as tidepooling, marine biology scavenger hunts, beach games, swimming, and attending marine science lessons at various Los Angeles beaches. The project aims to expand coastal access, support STEAM learning, and build confidence and leadership among girls who have had limited opportunities to experience the ocean.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Two Harbors on Santa Catalina Island, Paradise Cove, and White Point.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

FAMILY DYNAMICS RESOURCE CENTER

\$75,000

Coastal Access - Pathways to Leadership

Far North

As part of the project, Family Dynamics Resource Center will serve approximately 168 underserved youth from Shasta and Siskiyou Counties, including approximately 48 participants from high-level foster care that require increased supervision, mental, and/or physical health care, as well as youth exiting incarceration. The underserved youth are expected to be predominantly Native American. The Family Dynamics Resource Center will provide approximately eight 4-day, overnight coastal trips to various coastal areas in Northern California, such as Redwood National and State Parks, Sue-meg State Park, Humboldt Lagoons State Park, and Gold Bluffs Beach. Participants will have the opportunity to participate in one trip. Participants will be offered coastal activities, such as guided coastal hikes, shoreline and tide pool exploration, calm water kayaking, cultural learning with tribal mentors, and overnight camping. Participants will begin each day with grounding activities and a tribal land acknowledgment and then engage in sensory-based coastal learning, kayaking, wildlife observation, and cultural storytelling supported by therapists and trauma-informed staff. Evenings include shared meals, reflection circles, and routine activities that promote emotional regulation, leadership growth, and a sense of belonging in coastal environments.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Redwood National and State Parks, Sue-meg State Park, Patrick's Point State Park, Humboldt Lagoons State Park, Stone Lagoon, Big Lagoon, Mad River Estuary, Eel River Estuaries, and the Gold Bluffs Beach. The proposed project is also consistent with use of the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation grant awarded to the Conservancy in 2025 for the purpose of supporting the ETC grant program.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

GROUNDSWELL COMMUNITY PROJECT

\$63,500

Trauma-Informed Surf Therapy Program

**South Coast, Inland Southern
California and Deserts**

As part of this project, the Groundswell Community Project will serve approximately 32 adolescents and adults across San Diego County. The project is designed to support participants

from communities impacted by trauma, such as adolescents in foster care, youth from low-income households, immigrants, and survivors of human-trafficking. The Groundswell Community Project will provide approximately four 8-week surf therapy cohorts at Dog Beach in Ocean Beach. Participants will have the opportunity to attend multiple 8-week sessions. Participants will take part in grounding coastal activities, movement and breathwork, ocean conservation lessons, ocean safety lessons, beginner surfing instruction, and supported time in or near the water at their own pace. Each surf session will also include a group reflection to help participants build confidence, strengthen emotional regulation, and feel a sense of belonging at the coast. Participants will be paired one-on-one with a trained volunteer mentor and will be supported by licensed clinicians and trauma-informed surf instructors. The project's core goals are to support healing, increase comfort in ocean settings, and create leadership pathways for participants who return for alumni events or become trained mentors and facilitators.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Dog Beach, San Diego Ocean Beach.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

IMPERIAL COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

\$56,500

Jaguars Turning Tides

Inland Southern California and Deserts

As part of the project, Imperial County Office of Education will provide accessible coastal experiences for approximately 150 low-income participants (students and their families) from Imperial County to experience activities such as sailing, kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, coastal hiking, biking, and beach recreation. The Imperial County Office of Education will provide approximately 5 excursions to San Diego County beaches to explore and enjoy California's coast while building confidence, resilience, and essential life skills. Participants will have the opportunity to attend one excursion. Two of the trips will be family-inclusive trips that foster connection and shared experiences. Students who do not know how to swim will first receive beginner swimming and water safety instruction to ensure comfort and preparedness. While the focus of these excursions is fun, adventure, and time with peers, mentors, and family members, participants will also strengthen their independence, teamwork, and self-confidence. The project will incorporate environmental learning and reflection by teaching participants

about San Diego marine ecosystems, ocean safety, and the impacts of humans on marine environments and may result in students developing an appreciation for coastal ecosystems.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of San Diego Bay Shoreline Park, La Jolla Ecological Reserve, La Jolla Cove and La Jolla Shores, Mission Bay, Mission Point Park, and Torrey Pines State Beach and Reserve. The proposed project is consistent with the use of California Environmental License Plate Funds because it involves environmental education as described above.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (OUSD)

\$100,000

Transformative Coastal Trips for Oakland Youth

San Francisco Bay Area

Oakland Goes Outdoors (a project of OUSD) will provide approximately 1,000 low-income OUSD middle and high school students from six Title 1 schools with a combination of day and overnight trips to the Central and North coast. OUSD will host approximately 16 day trips and approximately 9 overnight trips, with each trip serving an average of approximately 40 students. Participants will have the opportunity to attend one trip. While on the trips, students will participate in activities such as guided hikes and beach exploration, wildlife viewing, ecosystem observation, community circles, cooperative challenges, and closing reflections. For many of these students, this will be their first time visiting the coast. Time at the coast is intentionally designed to be both enjoyable and healing, combining exploration, play, and sensory connection with structured reflection and team building that fosters belonging and connection to place. Students and their teachers are engaged in trip planning, resulting in increased confidence, trip ownership, and leadership skills. The project removes financial and logistical barriers by covering costs and coordinating select transportation, gear, and permits, allowing community-driven visions for coastal learning to be fully realized.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of coastal areas outside the San Francisco Bay Area, such as Año Nuevo State Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area (specifically Tennessee Valley Beach, Muir Beach, and Rodeo Beach), Half Moon Bay State Beach, Morro Bay State Park, Point Reyes National Seashore, Natural Bridges State Beach, and Point Lobos State Natural Reserve.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

ORANGE COUNTY MAKAPO AQUATICS PROJECT

\$100,000

Ohana Day Paddling Experience Program

**South Coast, Inland Southern
California and Deserts**

As part of this project, the Orange County (OC) Makapo Aquatics Project will serve approximately 1,200 participants comprising primarily of people with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disabilities, as well as participants from low-income households in Southern California counties. Participants will experience coastal activities, such as adaptive outrigger paddling, with guided time on the ocean where they will be supported by trained staff, volunteers, and adaptive equipment. The OC Makapo Aquatics Project will provide approximately 50 fun, free, and inclusive coastal recreation events at the Newport Aquatic Center in Newport Beach as well as other canoe club sites across the South Coast. Participants will have the opportunity to attend one event. At each event, participants will also rotate through supported onshore activities, including environmental learning and sensory-focused activities that support people with disabilities. Participants will be provided with a safety orientation, check-in circle, lunch, and closing circle to share reflections of moments of joy and connection with one another. Supporting people with disabilities to experience the water in this way increases confidence and provides a chance to connect to others with similar disabilities through facilitated conversations about living with a disability. Many staff and volunteers have disabilities as well and offer their lived experiences and professional training in water safety, adaptive support, and inclusive communication to the participant experience.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Newport Aquatic Center or other canoe club sites along the South Coast region.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.

- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

PEOPLE’S SELF-HELP HOUSING CORPORATION

\$35,000

Community Coastal Expeditions

Central Coast

As part of the project, Peoples’ Self-Help Housing Corporation (PSHH) will provide bilingual coastal day trips for approximately 250 low-income, English Language Learner participants (students and their families) from Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties to experience activities, such as tide-pool exploration, coastal trail walks, unstructured beach play, community picnics, and bilingual reflection circles. Some participants will have the opportunity to attend multiple trips. The project builds on Camino Scholars, PSHH’s existing after-school program for residents of PSHH’s affordable housing properties. PSHH will provide approximately 6 coastal daytrips to locations throughout the Central Coast region. Each trip will include bilingual educators to support the programming and facilitation to foster a sense of belonging and reduce language barriers. The trips are designed as community expeditions, where students who live as neighbors and share daily life on PSHH properties get to experience the coast together, often for the first time.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Montana de Oro, San Simeon, Cayucos Point Beaches, Oso Flaco Beach and Lake, Point Conception State Marine Reserve, and Rincon Beach.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

REFUGEE ENRICHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (REDA)

\$99,700

Refugee Coastal Retreats

Sacramento Valley and Sierras

As part of the project, REDA will provide approximately 4 overnight ocean retreats and two, one-day coastal trips for approximately 198 low-income refugees from the Sacramento area.

Each participant will have the opportunity to attend one of the six trips. Trips will take place at coastal locations, such as Mendocino Headlands State Park, Point Reyes National Seashore, Rodeo Beach and Muir Woods and Muir Beach. Overnight retreats consist of a two-night weekend trip with activities, such as visiting the historic lighthouse, playing volleyball, kite running, singing and storytelling, stargazing, participating in guided meditation to help with resettlement stressors, and hiking. A week prior to the trip, participants will attend a webinar to learn about trip logistics, safety plans, meal options, and packing guidelines. Day trips are designed for the entire family and include lunch and dinner, nature journaling, beach play, and other games and activities. The project is designed to help participants overcome fear of water and build self-confidence, provide peer-to-peer mentorship, connect participants to support services, and provide opportunities for family bonding. The goal of the trips is to foster healing at the coast. Many clients view the ocean for the first time in their life on these trips and get to do so with their families while being able to discuss their experiences in their native language.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of coastal areas, such as Point Reyes National Seashore Mendocino Headlands State Park MacKerricher State Park, Glass Beach, Rodeo Beach, Muir Woods, and Muir Beach. The proposed project is also consistent with use of the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation grant awarded to the Conservancy in 2025 for the purpose of supporting the ETC grant program.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

VENTANA WILDLIFE SOCIETY

\$50,000

East Salinas Club Comunitario de Naturaleza

Central Coast

As part of this project, Ventana Wildlife Society will provide coastal experiences for approximately 180 low-income participants comprising youth, ages 4-18 and their family members from East Salinas; participants are anticipated to be predominantly Latinx. Participants will experience coastal activities, such as learning camping skills, taking trips to coastal parks, hiking, whale and bird watching, kayaking, stargazing, engaging in citizen science, creating art, and storytelling over campfires. The Ventana Wildlife Society will provide approximately 96 weekly afterschool coastal trips, 8 single day family trips, and 4 overnight family campouts at Andrew Molera State Park. Participants will have the opportunity to attend

multiple events. This project encourages accessing open space access, building community, and promoting wellness and belonging for participants and their families. The layered approach of programming ensures weekly consistency and family bonding in the outdoors with transformative outdoor experiences to the coast for those who have been historically excluded or faced barriers. Recurring experiences in coastal settings over multiple months help youth and families build comfort with the coast as a space that is accessible and welcoming. Instructors are trauma-informed, bilingual, and culturally responsive in their facilitation of programming and support of youth and their families.

Funding: The proposed project is consistent with the use of Coastal Access Account funds because it involves operation of Moss Landing State Beach, Moss Landing Wildlife Viewing Area, Salinas River State Beach, Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge, Marina Dunes State Beach, Marina Dunes Preserve, Fort Ord Dunes State Park, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Andrew Molera State Park. The proposed project is also consistent with use of the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation grant awarded to the Conservancy in 2025 for the purpose of supporting the ETC grant program.

Enabling Legislation: The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways because it expands coastal access and enjoyment by providing coastal experiences as described in the project summary above.

Strategic Plan: The proposed project will further the following strategic objectives:

- **Goal 1.1:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA: The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA, pursuant to Title 14 of the CCR, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) because it involves regular operation of coastal locations that will be visited with no expansion of use.

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 projects recommended for funding under this authorization will serve approximately 3,998 people from communities throughout the state and will provide public access to the coast for recreational, educational, and stewardship programs. The proposed projects will leverage

approximately \$1.2 million in additional funding through project partners and hundreds of hours of support by volunteers.

The ETC grant program furthers the goals of the State’s 2023 Outdoors for All initiative to provide equitable access to parks and nature. The ETC program is specifically called out in Strategy 3.3.3 “Continue funding and exploring opportunities to expand grants that promote creative and affordable transportation options, including Explore the Coast and Parks California’s Route to Parks grants.” The ETC program is also consistent with the conservation priorities to expand access to nature identified in Pathways to 30x30.

3. Project includes a serious effort to engage tribes. Examples of tribal engagement include good faith, documented efforts to work with tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area.

Federally recognized tribes and Native Americans continue to be a priority under the ETC grant program. Project partners serving these communities collaborate closely with tribal members to facilitate access to ancestral coastal lands, support traditional stewardship and leadership development, and foster intergenerational knowledge sharing rooted in traditional ecological practices. Several projects will serve California Native American participants, including the following two that specifically engage tribal citizens and Native American youth:

- Amah Mutsun Land Trust’s Native Steward Internship and Coastal Stewardship Summer Camp, which provides immersive cultural and environmental education experiences that include Traditional Ecological Knowledge teachings for Amah Mutsun Tribal Band youth and their families on ancestral coastal lands in Mutsun and Awaswas territories.
- Family Dynamics Resource Center’s Coastal Access-Pathways to Leadership Program, which provides multi-day, trauma-informed coastal camping excursions for Native American communities from Shasta and Siskiyou Counties. Tribal mentors lead culturally grounded experiences, such as Indigenous storytelling, stewardship teachings, and traditional dance.

These projects exemplify a commitment to honoring Native American sovereignty and cultivating strong, place-based connections to the coast.

4. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.

While the primary objective of the ETC grant program is to provide Californians with joyful coastal experiences, the ETC program has several additional benefits. The recommended projects will reduce economic barriers by providing participants with free or reduced-cost program fees. The projects will reduce geographic barriers for coastal and inland communities alike through subsidized project transportation. Physical barriers are reduced by providing coastal experiences for people with disabilities through adaptive equipment on the beach and in the water. The projects will reduce societal barriers by offering safe access to coastal locations and culturally relevant activities. In addition, the projects will help to protect California’s coast for future generations by inspiring a coastal stewardship ethic.

Evidence suggests that underserved and frontline communities are disproportionately affected by social and environmental stressors. The proposed projects seek to reduce these stressors

either through direct coastal access or through a combination of access and intentional programming designed to provide mental and physical health benefits.

A subset of the projects recommended for funding will feature program elements that provide participants with leadership development and/or job training programs, preparing them for potential long-term opportunities in the environmental field.

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

The proposed projects are primarily led by nonprofit organizations who either have close ties with the communities they serve or are led by the communities themselves. Engagement typically involves dialogue between the communities being served and staff with relevant training and cultural competency.

The broad level of support for environmental education, resource protection and enhancement, and public access projects is indicated by the large numbers of people that will participate in the 2026-2027 ETC program. It is estimated that over 3,988 people will be served by the 13 ETC projects. In addition, this suite of proposed ETC projects is supported by elected officials, numerous community and nonprofit organizations, and local agencies (See Exhibit 3).

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$844,535
Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation (<i>via</i> a grant to the Conservancy)	\$120,000
Others (leveraged funds excluding in-kind)	\$1,228,885
Project Total	\$2,193,420

Conservancy funding is expected to come from three sources. The first funding source is an appropriation from the Conservancy's Coastal Access Account, which consists of coastal development permit application fees required by the California Coastal Commission pursuant to the Coastal Act (Public Resources Code Sections 30620.1(b) and 30620.2). Coastal Access Account funds may be used for grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations for the development, maintenance, and operation of new or existing facilities that provide public access to the coast, excluding the shoreline in San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's (BCDC) jurisdiction (the San Francisco Bay). Use of the Coastal Access Account funds is appropriate for proposed projects listed below because each will develop, maintain, or operate an existing facility that provides access to the coast and is located outside of BCDC's jurisdiction. Please refer to the "Project Summary" section, above, for more information on the specific facility(ies) associated with each proposed project.

- Refugee Enrichment and Development Association (Refugee Coastal Retreats)
- Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project (Ohana Day Paddling Experience Program)
- Ventana Wildlife Society (East Salinas Club Comunitario de Naturaleza)
- Color the Water (Surf Support Circles)
- Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT Native Stewards Internship & Coastal Stewardship Summer Camp)

- Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (Disability Outdoor Coastal Access Project)
- Groundswell Community Project (Trauma-Informed Surf Therapy Program)
- EmpowHer Institute (EmpowHer Coastal Access)
- Oakland Unified School District (Transformative Coastal Trips for Oakland Youth)
- Family Dynamics Resource Center (Coastal Access- Pathways to Leadership)
- Imperial County Office of Education (Jaguars Turning Tides)
- Peoples' Self-Help Housing Corporation (Community Coastal Expeditions)

The second expected funding source for the proposed projects is an appropriation from the California Environmental License Plate Fund, derived from sales and renewal of personalized license plates. Funds in the California Environmental License Plate Fund are available upon appropriation for purposes outlined in Public Resources Code Section 21190. These purposes include environmental education. Use of the Environmental License Plate Fund is appropriate for the proposed projects listed below, which include environmental education. The projects listed below will be funded, in part, by the California Environmental License Plate Fund. Please refer to the "Project Summary" section, above, for more information on how each of the proposed projects provides environmental education.

- Camp Phoenix (Camp Phoenix: Coast Belonging Project)
- Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (Disability Outdoor Coastal Access Project)
- Imperial County Office of Education (Jaguars Turning Tides)

The Conservancy was awarded a \$120,000 grant in 2025 from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation to support the ETC grant program. The Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation ETC funds can only be granted to nonprofit organizations or nonprofit fiscal sponsors. The following proposed nonprofit-led projects will be funded, in part, by the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation.

- Refugee Enrichment and Development Association (Refugee Coastal Retreats)
- Camp Phoenix (Camp Phoenix: Coast Belonging Project)
- Ventana Wildlife Society (East Salinas Club Comunitario de Naturaleza)
- Family Dynamics Resource Center (Coastal Access- Pathways to Leadership)

Project partners will leverage approximately \$1.2 million in other funds for the 2025-2026 ETC grants. The projects will also benefit from hundreds of hours of volunteer time, plus donations or price reductions on outdoor gear, clothing, equipment, and transportation services, and free site and facility usages via partnerships between organizations.

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:

Staff recommends the Conservancy find that the 13 proposed projects are consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code as described in the

“Project Summary” section, above. Below is a list, or reference to proposed projects that staff recommends the Conservancy find consistent with the relevant section of the Conservancy’s enabling legislation.

Chapter 4.5 San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program

The proposed project listed below will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31160-31165, regarding recreational and resource goals in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Pursuant to Section 31162(a), the Conservancy is authorized to award grants for projects located in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that will help improve public access to, within, and around the bay, coast, ridgetops and urban open spaces through completion and operation of regional bay, coast, water and ridge trail systems, and local trails connecting to population centers and public facilities. Pursuant to Section 31162(d), the Conservancy is authorized to award grants that promote, assist, and enhance projects that provide open space and natural areas that are accessible to urban populations for recreational and educational purposes. Pursuant to Section 31165, the Conservancy is authorized to award grants for activities that are compatible with the preservation, restoration, or enhancement of ocean, coastal, bay, or watershed resources, or that facilitate environmental education related to these resources. The projects listed below are consistent with these sections because they help to achieve at least one of these goals, as more particularly described in the “Project Summary” section, above.

- Camp Phoenix (Camp Phoenix: Coast Belonging Project)

Chapter 9: System of Public Accessways

All proposed projects will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31400-31410, regarding public access to and enjoyment of coastal resources.

Section 31400 states that it is the Legislature’s intent for the Conservancy to play a principal role in the implementation of a system of public accessways to and along the state’s coastline, including San Francisco Bay, and that the right of the public to access and enjoyment of the coastal resources should be effectively guaranteed. Section 31400.3 authorizes the Conservancy to provide such assistance as is required to aid public agencies and nonprofit organizations in establishing a system of public coastal accessways, and related functions necessary to meet the objectives of Division 21. All projects proposed are consistent with these sections because each project helps guarantee that all members of the public in the State of California have a right to access and to enjoyment of coastal resources, which is more particularly described in the “Project Summary” section, above.

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

All 13 of the projects proposed for funding are consistent with Strategic Plan goals listed below. Please see the “Project Summary” section, above, for more information on how each proposed project meets these goals.

- **Goal 1.1 Commit Funding to Benefit Systemically Excluded Communities:** The project directly benefits one or more systemically excluded communities.
- **Goal 2.1 Explore The Coast Program Grants:** The project provides enjoyable coastal experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

All of the proposed projects are categorically exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), which exempts the operation, maintenance, and minor alterations of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use, including bicycle and pedestrian trails. Please see the “Project Summary” section above, for more information on each proposed project and its compliance with CEQA.

Upon approval of the projects, Conservancy staff will file Notices of Exemption for each project.