

Annual Report 2025

The year 2025 marked a period of action and investment for the California State Coastal Conservancy. Driven by the urgency of the climate crisis, shifting federal priorities, and our commitment to prioritizing equity, the Conservancy authorized over \$55 million in new grants this year to over 50 projects to protect and restore our coast, improve climate resilience, prevent catastrophic wildfires, and expand public access.

Our funding was leveraged by over \$126 million in state and non-state funding to support projects from Del Norte to San Diego County.

2025 began with the devastating wildfires in Altadena and Pacific Palisades. In response to these catastrophic fires, the State Legislature and Governor passed AB100 in April, moving \$170 million in “early action” funding from the 2024 Climate Bond (Prop 4) to support forest and vegetation management projects critical to protecting communities from wildfire. \$30,904,000 of that total came to the Conservancy's Wildfire Resilience Program, which worked quickly to allocate nearly \$10 million to two tribes, one university, one local fire safe, and one land trust in 2025 for wildfire prevention activities on over 1,000 acres of land.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are hopeful that the Conservancy's other Prop 4 appropriations will be available to go towards projects. This funding includes substantial funding for coastal flood protection, coastal resilience, and resilience in the San Francisco Bay.

State leadership and funding for coastal protection, habitat restoration, and climate resilience has proven more important than ever this year. As we enter our 50th year in 2026,



Executive Officer Amy Hutzell

the Conservancy is building on five decades of partnerships to safeguard our coastal resources and help Californians enjoy them for the next 50 years.

- Amy Hutzler, January 2026



2025 in Numbers

- **\$55 million** awarded to **50 projects** spanning the coast.
- **15,000+ Acres Protected/Restored**: Including critical wetlands, redwood forests, and tribal ancestral lands.
- **25+ Miles of Trail**: Progressed or completed segments of the California Coastal Trail and Great Redwood Trail.
- **13,000+ People Reached**: Through the Explore the Coast program, prioritizing historically excluded communities.

Prioritize Equity

The Coastal Conservancy is committed to addressing injustices and inequities along the California coast. In 2020, the Coastal Conservancy Board adopted Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines (JEDI Guidelines) that set out principles about our agency's role in promoting equity, inclusion, and diversity and addressing environmental justice. This year, we continued to implement our JEDI priorities through a number of initiatives to identify, understand, and address inequities, and through our efforts to implement practices at our agency to deliver more equitable outcomes.

Funding for Projects Benefitting Systemically Excluded Communities

In our Strategic Plan, the Conservancy set an objective of spending 40% of our funds on projects that benefit systemically excluded communities. Since we began tracking in 2023, **66% of our funding has met that criterion.**

The Conservancy provided up to \$3,091,148 to the City and County of San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, to augment the Conservancy grant authorized on February 15, 2024 of \$5,500,000, to implement **the India Basin Waterfront Park** Phase 3:



India Basin Waterfront Park Celebration

Shoreline Park Redevelopment Project. This project is redeveloping the India Basin Shoreline Park in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco into a mixed-use community park with improved public access and recreational amenities, enhanced habitat, and climate resilience. Climate resilience features of the park include 2.7 acres of native sage scrub habitat and about 6% of the gardens designed as bioretention basins that will capture and treat stormwater runoff. In August, we joined with city officials and community members to celebrate the start of construction.

The Conservancy augmented an existing grant to the Noyo Center for Marine Science for the construction of a multipurpose work facility for large-scale marine mammal exhibition displays, community education, and marine research equipment repair and storage, and for future use as a marine research and blue economy projects workspace. The Noyo Center serves a significant role in **stimulating regional economic development**, and the project will help the Noyo Center with its ongoing efforts to revitalize Noyo Harbor, promote sustainable

economic development, and improve coastal habitats by gradually shifting the community's economic relationship with the ocean from over-extraction to sustainable balance.

Return Power to Tribes

The Conservancy is committed to improving and expanding our efforts to return power to tribes, and to prioritizing tribal partnerships in our work.

In 2025, **the Prairie Creek Floodplain Restoration Project site at 'O Rew was completed** in partnership with the Yurok Tribe, Save the Redwoods League, CalTrout, as well as many others. This project has had five phases of SCC support over ten years. After five years of construction and more than a decade of planning, 2025 marks the completion of work on a 125-acre ecologically and culturally important property on California's North Coast. This project marks the final downstream opportunity to restore floodplain rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead in the Redwood Creek watershed. The Yurok Tribe Construction Corporation built a new meandering stream channel with abundant features to support fish, two connected ponds and approximately 20 acres of floodplain habitat. Additionally, this project implemented a stewardship program funding the Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department Revegetation Crew to care for the site over the next three years. In 2026, the land will officially return to the Tribe, its original stewards.

The Conservancy awarded a \$2 million grant to the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County to **acquire 1,720 acres of the historic Rana Creek Ranch** along Tularcitos Creek in upper Carmel Valley to return land to a local tribe, and protect water quality, natural and cultural resources, and wildlife habitat. The Tribe's vision for the land prioritizes community wellness and the restoration of biodiversity and climate resilience. Planned initiatives include riparian corridor restoration, the preservation and propagation of ancient "ancestor" oak trees, the revival of cultural fire practices, and the restoration of Esselen Tribal food sovereignty. The acquisition closed in June 2025.



Blue Creek celebration

In June, the Western Rivers Conservancy, the Yurok Tribe, the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the Conservancy announce completion of **the largest single “land back” deal in California history**. The 73 square miles (47,000 acres) of land along the eastern side of the lower Klamath River are now owned and managed by the Yurok Tribe as the Blue Creek Salmon Sanctuary and Yurok Tribal Community Forest. State funding and support for the Blue Creek Salmon Sanctuary and Yurok Tribal Community Forest was provided by the California Wildlife Conservation Board, California State Coastal Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the California Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program.

Reducing Barriers to Conservancy Funding

The Conservancy implemented several measures this year to make it easier for applicants to submit successful funding applications.

To support the early stages of developing proposals, we launched a **Technical Assistance Program** that connects applicants or potential applicants with staff who can determine if Conservancy funding is the right fit and help refine their project ideas. In December, the Conservancy held another webinar on Grant Writing to help applicants write competitive proposals.

Over the course of the year, we hosted **several webinars and office hours sessions** to explain how our Climate Bond (Prop 4) funding will be made available, and other funding opportunities outside of the Conservancy. These included webinars focused on Prop 4, and two separate multi-agency webinars on funding for coastal resilience and shoreline flooding projects, and regional office hours.



Coastal Conservancy Staff

Enjoy the Coast

Improving the ability of all Californians to access and enjoy the coast is central to the Conservancy's mission. This year, project funding went to trail projects, public access amenities, and to our flagship Explore the Coast, and Explore the Coast Overnight.

Explore the Coast Program Grants

This year, we authorized **\$966,316 to 13 nonprofit organizations for projects that facilitate and enhance the public's opportunities to explore the California coast** through our Explore the Coast program. Staff estimates that this year's program will engage over 8,400 people. Of these people, project partners estimate that the program will serve over 6,700 low-income Californians, 7,000 people of color, 660 youth who are houseless or in foster care, approximately 3,200 people for whom English is not their first language, and at least 1,600 people with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disabilities.



Explore the Coast Grantee Color the Water

Explore the River

This year, the Santa Ana River Conservancy program Conservancy held an RFP **for Explore the River grants** to fund experiences for people and communities who face challenges or barriers to accessing or enjoying the Santa Ana River.

Coastal Stories Program

Conservancy staff partnered with PBS SoCal (KCET) to develop and host an [interactive map](#) of projects and [video features](#) on a number of the projects. The intention of this work was to help amplify the impact of these projects so they could be viewed online, not just at their physical location. Publicizing and broadcasting the stories to a larger audience will increase the impact of the Coastal Stories grants, help to **normalize new perspectives, and shift the culture towards more inclusion in outdoors spaces.**

Build Trails

The Conservancy's support for the Bay Area Ridge Trail dates back to 1998. Since then, the Conservancy has awarded nearly \$10 million in grants to the Ridge Trail Council directly and a further \$21.5 million to projects that are building ridge trail segments. This year we celebrated the **opening of the Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve to Calero County Park segment** in Santa Clara County. This scenic trail connects two open spaces



Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve to Calero County Park Ridge Trail

across more than 14 miles of trail that traverses rolling oak woodlands and seasonal wildflower displays with sweeping views of the Diablo Range and Santa Cruz Mountains.

The Conservancy provided \$4,350,000 in grants to the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District for preparation of design, engineering and other documentation needed for environmental review for the **1.5-mile Green River Golf Course Segment of the Santa Ana River Trail in Riverside County**. The Green River Golf Course segment of the Santa Ana River Trail will begin where the Orange County portion of the Santa Ana River Trail ends and will continue east, adjacent to the Green River Golf Course to the Prado Dam.

The Conservancy helped to fund the City of Ukiah to implement Phase 4 of the Ukiah Great Redwood Trail Project, consisting of construction of a 1.9-mile portion of the Great Redwood Trail between Plant Road and Commerce Drive in the City of Ukiah, Mendocino County. This project, which is nearly finished, **completes the Great Redwood Trail through the City of Ukiah**.



Great Redwood Trail bridge in Ukiah

The Conservancy funded the trail design, environmental review, and permit applications for the Pedro Point Headlands segment of the California Coastal Trail in San Mateo County. The **Pedro Point Coastal Trail will fill an approximately 1.3 mile gap in the California Coastal Trail**, linking the urban community of the City of Pacifica to Devil's Slide and adjacent open space and recreational trails. It will provide access to stunning views from the Pedro Point Headlands. It will also increase safety by providing an alternate route for cyclists on Highway 1.

In August, we joined East Bay Regional Park District and partners at Point Molate Beach Park to break ground on a **2.5-mile extension of the San Francisco Bay Trail**. The trail project will create a pedestrian and bike path connecting the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge to the historic Winehaven district, transforming a previously inaccessible stretch of SF Bay shoreline into an attractive recreational area for walking, bicycling, fishing, kayaking, and public enjoyment of a sandy beach park. The Conservancy also funded the Richmond portion of the trail through a separate grant from an earlier year. The Park District also closed on the 82-acre acquisition of Pt Molate, funded by the Conservancy. The shoreline property will be permanently preserved and converted into a regional park.



Pt. Molate Trail Groundbreaking

Recreation Facilities & Amenities

There are many ways Californians enjoy their coast; our funding aims to facilitate all types of coastal recreation and access.

In December, we celebrated the **ribbon cutting of the City of Santa Ana's Santiago Park Phase II improvements**, including picnic areas, Santiago Creek overlooks, lighting, drought tolerant landscaping, irrigation, fencing, an entry monument at Main Street, a pedestrian path and a bike path that connects to the Santiago Creek Bike Trail. Phase II was made possible by funding from the Conservancy.



Santiago Park Phase II Ribbon Cutting

The Conservancy provided a \$2,000,000 grant to the City of Anaheim for the construction of River Park, **a 3.3-acre nature park to restore natural habitat and provide recreational opportunities along the Santa Ana River** in Anaheim. Located between the Santa Ana River Trail and Angel Stadium, the project will restore natural habitat for wildlife, provide amenities for the local community, and establish a convenient connection between local neighborhoods and the Santa Ana River. River Park will be the City's 68th park, and the first phase and gateway of the larger OC River Walk project, a multi-benefit project to transform the Santa Ana River corridor in Anaheim.

In December, **Hawk Hill in the Marin Headlands, known for having one of the most spectacular views of San Francisco Bay, fully reopened** after a 15-year makeover of its popular trails, military relics and lookout points. The Conservancy funded two phases of these improvements, including the final phase of habitat restoration and access improvements. This project also rehabilitated the unique WWII era Battery Commander Station and the last remaining elevated Nike Radar Platform within the GGNRA both of which are located at the top of Hawk Hill. A new bridge provides public access to the radar platform which was transformed into a viewing area.



Environmental Education at Hawk Hill

The Conservancy provided a total of \$4,377,389 grant to the Coastside Land Trust to construct **public access improvements at the Wavecrest property in Half Moon Bay**. These improvements include 1.5 miles of California Coastal Trail, at least 1.5 miles of additional trail and spur trails to parking and beach access, two parking lots, and two beach stairways facilitating access to Redondo Beach on both the northern and southern sides of the property. The Wavecrest is a significant gap in the California Coastal Trail and the informal CCT segment that had developed is unsafe and inaccessible to people who use wheelchairs and otherwise difficult to navigate for people with mobility challenges or families

with strollers. And though the spot is popular, there is currently no dedicated parking lot for it, nor amenities such as bathrooms or beach access points.

Explore the Coast Overnight

To expand the supply of lower cost overnight accommodation near the coast, the Conservancy funded the Hill Street Country Club, a nonprofit organization with a mission to encourage art beyond gallery walls, to undertake the Hill Street Arts Hotel Feasibility Study and community engagement to establish **a new lower cost, arts-focused hotel in Oceanside**. Artists and community members have increasingly described feeling unwelcome or unwanted along the coast, particularly as Oceanside has experienced development and rapid gentrification in the last 15 years. This project intends to create an open and accessible environment for hotel guests to feel welcome connecting to the coastline, attracting guests who are looking for a unique experience.

The Conservancy provided a \$1,500,000 grant to the California Department of Parks and Recreation to conduct planning and studies, and preparing designs, environmental review,



Existing Silver Strand RV Campground

and permit applications for **increasing lower-cost accommodations at Silver Strand State Beach in San Diego County**. One of the biggest barriers for low and middle-income Californians to accessing and enjoying the coast is the lack of affordable overnight options. Nearly 60% of Californians never spend the night when they visit the coast. This project will help expand coastal camping in Southern California through the planning and design for the expansion of an existing Recreational Vehicle campground at Silver Strand State Beach in Coronado to provide a wider variety of overnight options with approximately 54 new lower cost overnight accommodations including 20 camper trailers, 16 cottages, 16 tent sites, two hike and bike campsites, upgraded restrooms, and a new campground kiosk.

Protect and Restore the Coast

The Conservancy works to ensure the coast is protected and restored for existing and future generations. We support projects and activities that protect and enhance the coast's scenic, natural, and agricultural resources, which are vital to the state's economy and quality of life, as well as to the wildlife that depends upon them.

Conserve Land

In April, the Land Trust of Napa County expanded Moore Creek Park to over 2,100 acres by **acquiring the 523-acre Phinney property** and transferring it to the Napa County Regional Park an Open Space District. The project enhances habitat connectivity and supports wildlife movement between 9,000 acres of adjacent protected lands. The Property also protects the



Dan's Wild Ride Trail in the Phinney Property, Moore Creek Park, Napa

length of Moore Creek, one of the main sources of water for City of Napa residents and fills a key gap in a priority wildlife corridor.

In March, Conservancy funding helped CalTrout **close the 175-acre Prior Ranch acquisition** in Humboldt County, which will be restored to riparian and wetlands as part of the Elk River Habitat Restoration Project. 35 of those acres have been returned to the Wiyot Tribe. These 35 acres include the main area where the Tribe traditionally fished for salmon on the Elk River. This acquisition is part of a larger acquisition and planning effort to restore and enhance the Elk River Wildlife Area and adjacent lands on the Elk River.

In August, East Bay Regional Park District completed its **\$40 million acquisition of 82 acres at Point Molate in Richmond** in August. The Conservancy contributed \$36 million to create a regional shoreline park that will protect open space and provide compatible public access, including recreational and visitor-serving amenities. Point Molate affords sweeping open space views of the shoreline and Bay, Mt Tamalpais, the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, and the East Brother Light Station. The District has placed the property into “Land Bank” status and will coordinate closely with the City of Richmond on initial management until it can develop a public access plan and make the site safe and suitable for opening to the public.

Restore or Enhance Habitats

In 2023, the Conservancy provided a \$31 million grant to restore coastal wetland habitat, increase resilience to sea level rise, and open new public access on 54 acres of former industrial land as part of the **Los Cerritos Wetlands Southern Area Restoration. This project broke ground in 2025** and will take two years to complete. Restoration has begun at the western part of the wetlands. This phase will also include the creation of a community hub and gathering place that will provide education, an open space for residents to learn about nature, and access for tribal groups.

In 2025, the Conservancy helped to fund the City of Fortuna to complete pre-acquisition tasks and **acquire 237 acres along the Lower Eel River in Fortuna**, Humboldt County. The City will retain 7.2 acres for open space, public access, and recreation, and the remaining 230 acres will be transferred to the Wiyot Tribe for the preservation of open space; protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural resources and habitat for fish and wildlife; protection of cultural resources; and to the extent compatible with habitat protection, providing public access and California Native American tribal cultural use and access. The Eel River is California's third largest watershed, and the Lower Eel River is a critical coastal wetlands area for multiple listed species and riparian birds. The project area includes riverine habitat, freshwater forested/scrub wetland, and freshwater emergent marsh and ponds. The project continues historic efforts to protect and restore the Lower Eel River, an effort involving multiple local, state and federal agencies, tribes, and non-profits.

In May, the Conservancy joined the John Muir Land Trust, the Contra Costa County Flood Control District, and many other partners to celebrate the **opening of the Lower Walnut Creek Habitat Restoration Project** (also known as Pacheco Marsh). The Conservancy passed



Pacheco Marsh Opening

\$970,000 from a US Fish and Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant to the Contra Costa County Flood Control District for implementation of the Lower Walnut Creek Habitat Restoration Project, consisting of restoration and enhancement of 227 acres of tidal wetlands and large upland transition areas that provide space for natural marsh migration with sea level rise. Funding from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, staffed by the Conservancy, supported the construction of trails, bridges, a kayak launch, interpretive signs, and other amenities that will enable the site to serve as an important educational and recreational area for disadvantaged communities in northern Contra Costa County.

The Conservancy funded **Sea Otter Savvy** for the fifth year in a row for an ongoing campaign to educate members of the public, fisheries groups, marine recreation businesses, and engage tribal groups on the historic and the potential future role of sea otters in northern California. Sea Otter Savvy's work is twofold: they are creating accessible, science-based resources on sea otter history, ecology, and cultural significance, to provide the public and stakeholders with the tools needed to understand the implication of sea otter recovery in northern California and the San Francisco Bay Area, and they train coastal recreational businesses on responsible viewing of wildlife, including sea otters when they are reintroduced to their historic habitat in northern California counties.



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Climate Ready

The Conservancy is funding and supporting local communities, nonprofits, public agencies, and other partners to plan multi-objective climate change adaptation strategies along the coast and implementation of nature-based climate adaptation projects to mitigate the current and future impacts of a changing climate including rising seas, intense storms, and catastrophic wildfires.

Sea Level Rise Adaptation Projects

The **South San Francisco Bay Shoreline project celebrated a milestone this year**. The project, which is designed to reduce flooding risk for thousands of people living in low lying areas of Alviso and expand habitat for fish and wildlife, completed a \$197 million project to build two miles of new levees along San Francisco Bay's southern shoreline. The new 15-foot-high clay and dirt structures stretch from Alviso Marina County Park to the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center and enhance public access along the levee.



Milestone celebration for South Bay Shoreline Project

In April, the Conservancy joined the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department to open **Sunset Dunes, is the largest pedestrianization project in California's history**, with the 2-mile, 50-acre park stretching from Sloat Boulevard to Lincoln Way. This historic oceanfront park provides residents and visitors a place to walk, bike, stroll, relax, and connect along the Pacific coast. The roadway, previously called the Upper Great Highway, suffered ongoing issues with sand erosion from the adjacent beach and dunes caused by high winds and storms but exacerbated by human-made foot trails that trample dune plants. Conservancy funding supported technical studies and community engagement, and preparing conceptual alternatives.

In 2023, the Conservancy funded the City of Santa Cruz to assess the feasibility of using living shorelines, sand management techniques, and other nature-based solutions to address coastal hazards and advance climate adaptation planning along 3.2 miles of the Santa Cruz coastline. The study, which is now complete, found that **nature-based solutions offer a promising path to buffer the coast while enhancing habitats and maintaining public access**. By piloting dunes at Main Beach, integrating green-grey strategies along West Cliff, and continuing to evaluate future options, the City is now positioning itself as a leader in innovative and community-centered coastal resilience by developing scalable strategies that can benefit the broader California coast.

The Conservancy-funded the **Regionally Advancing Living Shorelines in San Francisco Bay (RALS) Project** partnered with Golden Gate Bird Alliance, Marin Audubon Society, and Ducks Unlimited to issue three RFPs seeking consultant services for the engineering and ecological design of living shoreline projects in three regions of Central San Francisco Bay. The designs will integrate a variety of nature-based approaches and are part of the broader RALS effort to build the body of practice for advancing design and construction of living shorelines to increase climate resilience and shoreline protection in San Francisco Bay. The Conservancy initially funded the project in 2022.

Wildfire Resilience Projects

In September, the Conservancy provided up to \$850,000 to the City of Albany to implement forest management activities on **8.5 acres at Albany Hill and the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area**, invest in continuing partnerships for workforce development, and demonstrate uses for milled eucalyptus. The cities will employ contractors to perform the work as necessary, including Urban Tilth, a Richmond-based nonprofit focused on training and employing local youth while reconnecting them with the land. The two cities will build support for the removal of dead and dying eucalyptus trees and native plant restoration by hosting milling demonstration on-site, educating attendees about sources and uses of milled wood and its ecological benefits, and showcasing projects that have previously utilized reclaimed wood for public amenities (i.e. retaining walls and trail steps), as well as hosting community



Albany-El Cerrito Wildfire Resilience Demonstration Project

workdays, inviting the public to join work parties and learn about native plant communities, the hazards of eucalyptus trees, and how to consider natural areas as holistic ecosystems.

In November, the Conservancy allocated **\$9.4 million in early action Climate Bond funding** to:

- [Esselen Tribe of Monterey County](#): \$1,250,000 to plan and implement a series of cultural fire trainings that include live fire cultural burning operations on 50 to 500 acres of land.
- [La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians](#): \$2,900,000 for strategic fuel treatment of 516 acres and cultural burns of 219 acres of land. The project will use a combination of cultural burning, manual and mechanical methods to thin dense vegetation, remove dead and dying trees, and reduce hazardous trees and ladder fuels. Under the guidance of the Tribe's cultural fire practitioners, the cultural burns will be planned and implemented for 219 acres of the project site. The project includes building lasting community resilience through direct engagement and training.
- [Mendocino County Fire Safe Council](#): \$803,000 to continue their free community chipping program, implement volunteer workdays, and develop a sustainability plan, over three years.
- [University of California San Diego](#): \$1,400,000 to remove Eucalyptus trees and restore the native chaparral ecosystem on a 30-acre site to improve wildfire resiliency and to serve as a biochar demonstration project.
- [Sempervirens Fund](#): \$3,050,000 to undertake the Big Basin Redwood Wildfire Resilience Project, consisting of vegetation fuels reduction and habitat enhancement on 215 acres in the old-growth coast redwood area of Big Basin Redwood State Park.

