

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
August 5, 2010

**CRESCENT CITY HARBOR PROMENADE DESIGN**

File No. 09-021  
Project Manager: Deborah Hirst

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$685,000 to the Crescent City Harbor District to prepare harbor design guidelines and standards for public access and future development, and to complete engineered plans and permits for a waterfront promenade, a Coastal Trail segment and other public access improvements in Crescent City Harbor, Del Norte County.

**LOCATION:** Crescent City, Del Norte County

**PROGRAM CATEGORY:** Public Access

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***EXHIBITS:***

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Promenade and Coastal Trail Design Map](#)

Exhibit 3: [Crescent City Harbor Photographs](#)

Exhibit 4: [Project Letters](#)

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31400-31409 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed six hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$685,000) to the Crescent City Harbor District (“Harbor District”) to prepare harbor design guidelines and standards for public access and future development, and to complete engineered plans and permits for a waterfront promenade, a Coastal Trail segment and other public access improvements in Crescent City Harbor, Del Norte County, subject to the following conditions: 1) prior to the disbursement of funds, the Harbor District shall submit for the written approval of the Conservancy’s Executive Officer a work program and budget for the project, and the names and qualifications of all contractors to be used on the project; and 2) the Harbor

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District shall insure that all guidelines, standards and engineered plans prepared as part of the proposed project incorporate the minimization of greenhouse gases.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted by the Conservancy on June 4, 2009.
3. The project will serve greater than local needs.”

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### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize the disbursement of up to six hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$685,000) to the Crescent City Harbor District (“Harbor District”), a public entity, to prepare the Harbor Design Guidelines, Waterfront Promenade Design Standards and Harbor Sign Program called for in the Crescent City Harbor District Master Plan (2006) as well to prepare engineered plans and permits for public access improvements including a 1.24-mile link in the California Coastal Trail, a 1.42-mile waterfront promenade, and directional and interpretive signs for pedestrian access through the Crescent City Harbor to Whaler Island and Crescent Beach in Del Norte County (see Exhibits 1 and 2).

The proposed project will enable the Harbor District to move forward with public access improvements recommended in the Crescent City Harbor District Harbor Master Plan (2006), developed through a 25-month process of analysis and public input and funded in part by the Coastal Conservancy, the City of Crescent City and the County of Del Norte. Recent tsunami damage to the inner boat basin and general lack of adequate public access improvements in the Crescent City Harbor (“Harbor”) necessitate investment for public coastal access (See Exhibit 3 for current Harbor photographs).

The proposed project consists of six components:

- 1) An illustrated set of **Harbor Design Guidelines** will be prepared to govern site design and architectural character for all new development and renovations in the Harbor, including landscape, building colors, streetscape, and lighting features designed to shield nighttime glare. Preparation of the guidelines will help the Harbor District achieve its goal of revitalizing the Harbor, which will promote and enhance public access to and along the waterfront in the Harbor.

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- 2) A **Harbor Sign Program** will be developed for directional and interpretive signs needed to guide and enhance the visitor experience on Harbor property. The program will be consistent with the overall Harbor Design Guidelines and will identify the locations and sign content needed for access points, parking areas, launch facilities, Harbor entry monuments, scenic overlooks, restrooms and interpretation of the coastal environment. In addition, the proposed project includes preparation of designs and permits for the signs identified in the Sign Program.
- 3) **Waterfront Promenade Design Standards** will be developed to provide guidelines for a continuous waterfront walkway through the Harbor (the “Promenade”) for strolling, sitting, wildlife viewing, picnicking and coastal access. The Promenade Standards will give specifications for the accessway width, surface treatment, guardrail treatment, lighting, landscaping, trashcans, benches and picnic tables (“street furniture”) for the waterfront areas of the Harbor. The Promenade will be designed to incorporate public access into a working harbor by taking into account fishing activities, safety, traffic and significant weather conditions.
- 4) Engineered **Waterfront Promenade Plans** will be prepared for the Promenade (see Exhibit 2). The Promenade may vary in width according to the Design Standards, and plans will address location-specific design issues around the Inner Boat Basin and along the Anchor Way Groin to Whaler Island. The engineered plans will be developed taking into account Americans with Disabilities Act considerations and input from the public. In addition, the proposed project includes completion of the environmental review process required by the California Environmental Quality Act, preparation of final construction bid documents and completion of the permitting process for the Promenade.

The Inner Boat Basin segment of the Promenade will provide an attractive and safe view of the harbor and its activities around the new inner boat basin area. This section of the Promenade will be a minimum of ten feet wide and constructed of concrete with a marine railing running the entire length where it meets the waterfront. The Promenade will avoid crossing the waterfront adjacent to Citizen’s dock, the boat works, and the fish processing facility area of the Harbor out of concern for public safety. Instead, the design will direct public access up along Citizen’s Dock Road to connect with the Coastal Trail running south along Starfish Way.

The Anchor Way Groin/Whaler Island segment of the Promenade will begin at the edge of the Coastal Trail at Anchor Way and continue around the groin out to Whaler Island. Pedestrians currently walk along the road surface of Anchor Way to gain access to Whaler Island and to enjoy views of Crescent Beach, the ocean, Redwood National and State Park and the Inner Harbor. The design for this segment must maintain vehicular access for the Coast Guard and the public to use a boat ramp for small water crafts, a cove that serves as a put-in facility for kayakers on the northeast side of the island, and other Whaler Island features. The south-western portion of the Promenade must address a narrow pinch-point of road and public access just before reaching the final parking lot at Whaler Island. Additionally, the Promenade design must address the extreme wind and weather of the coastal exposure along Anchor Way to the south. To the greatest extent feasible, the Promenade and other access improvements will be designed to withstand the

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storm events and heavy wave action that can be anticipated due to climate change and the marine environment.

5) Engineered plans for the **California Coastal Trail Extension** will be prepared. In addition, the proposed project includes completion of the permitting process for construction of this Coastal Trail segment. The engineered plans for the Coastal Trail will be developed taking into account Americans with Disabilities Act considerations and input from the public. The California Coastal Trail Extension will pass through Crescent City Harbor and will be designed as a multi-user Class I Trail with a twelve-foot wide asphalt surface bordered by gravel. The trail will have lighting for safety and to expand hours of use. The alignment of the trail is expected to connect from the City on the north via Sunset Circle to bring access from the recently completed pedestrian bridge over Elk Creek down into the Harbor's property. The Harbor's Coastal Trail segment will travel along the edge of an existing greenway off Highway 101 on Harbor Property. The greenway will retain its current natural character, while improvements such as benches, picnic tables and landscaping may be added. The Coastal Trail alignment will turn to follow Citizen's Dock Road west and then curve south to travel along Starfish Way. The trail will lead to Highway 101 at the end of Citizen's Dock Road where a crosswalk currently exists, and also at the southern entrance to the Harbor at Anchor Way.

The Coastal Trail design will include four connector segments from the Coastal Trail to Sunset Circle and to Crescent Beach at the northern edge of the Harbor property, from the Promenade to Crescent Beach at the southern edge of the Harbor, and from the terminus of the Promenade to a footpath around Whaler Island. The Whaler Island connector trail segment will improve an existing footpath leading up this rocky outcrop to offer a 360-degree view from the far western end of the Promenade on Anchor Way. The connector trail in the north is expected to be a paved path from the Promenade leading to a single-track footpath continuing on to the beach. There are two options for the connection to Sunset Circle that will be considered, one route would require securing an access easement from an adjacent property owner while the other would be a slightly less direct route designed on existing Harbor right-of-way. The connection to Crescent Beach will be designed to include a ramp or other safe access down riprap currently lining the southern edge of Anchor Way. The trail connection from Anchor Way to Highway 101 will involve coordination with Del Norte County for a permit to use an existing County public access right-of-way.

6) **North and South Harbor Restrooms** – The proposed project includes preparation of designs, engineered plans and permitting for two Americans with Disabilities Act accessible restrooms that will serve marina and harbor visitors as well as the public utilizing the Coastal Trail. The North Harbor facility will include approximately 8-10 toilets, 10 sinks, 4 showers and a fish cleaning station. The South Harbor facility will be slightly smaller but will include similar restroom amenities.

Crescent City Harbor District was formed in 1951 as a special district to manage the marina and harbor related facilities in Del Norte County. The Coastal Act of 1976 added responsibility to the District to provide coastal-dependant, visitor-serving, and recreational uses to the harbor. Five elected Harbor Commissioners appoint a Harbor

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Master to manage day-to-day operations and supervise the staff of 8 employed by the Harbor District.

### **Site Description:**

Roughly 20 miles south of the Oregon Border, Crescent City Harbor is the main draw of the urban waterfront in Crescent City, Del Norte County. Visible driving north or south on Highway 101, the Harbor offers a viewshed that encompasses the landmark Battery Point Lighthouse (1856) to the north, commercial and recreational boats and the Pacific to the west, the rocky peninsula known as Whaler Island and coastal views down Crescent Beach to the south, and an expanse of permanently protected redwood forests to the southeast.

Functionally, Crescent City Harbor in Del Norte County is the only “safe harbor” and commercial fishing port on the coast from Eureka, CA to Brookings, OR. While Northern California has seen a dramatic drop in seafood landings by poundage since the 1950s, Crescent City continues to hold a significant proportion of recent seafood landings for the region. Businesses located in the Harbor include a fish processing plant, a fishing supply merchant, a ship repair warehouse and approximately 38 leases for businesses operating on the 80-acre area managed by the Harbor District. The current \$23 million inner boat basin project being completed by the Harbor will provide 234 slips for use by commercial and recreational fisherman and women working out of Crescent City in addition to 1,000 feet of tie-up space for additional watercraft.

Significant declines in forestry and fishing over the past few decades have shifted focus to service sectors of the economy. Recreation and tourism are seen as central to the efforts to revitalize Del Norte County. The area offers a tremendous wealth of publicly protected redwood forests, rugged mountains, coastal dunes, beaches, rocky shoreline and dramatic offshore sea stacks. Coastal access and outdoor recreational opportunities are very attractive to tourists and visitors who are critical to the local economy. Currently, the California Employment Development Department estimates the March 2010 unemployment rate for Del Norte County at 14%. Based on the most recent 2000 Census data, the County has a poverty rate of twenty point two percent (20.2%) and Crescent City has a poverty rate of thirty-four point six percent (34.6%). Making improvements to encourage visitor and thereby increase visitor usage to the Harbor and the Crescent City area will have a positive economic benefit consistent with economic development plans for the area.

Many feel the Harbor is central to the definition of the County’s character and a visual hub to interest visitors in to staying longer in Del Norte County. Businesses located at the Harbor are diverse, from fishing related services to an art gallery and upscale ocean-view dining. Future leases anticipated in the Harbor Master Plan and being discussed with the Harbor include a multi-agency visitors center for the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, local nonprofits and the Chamber of Commerce, and additional

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visitor-serving businesses like hotels and restaurants. Locating a destination level feature like a promenade at the Harbor will work with the significant harbor improvements currently underway to attract the public to improved coastal access and recreation.

The proposed project for the Harbor District will connect California Coastal Trail access from Crescent Beach north up through the Harbor to link with additional Conservancy supported Coastal Trail improvements including the City's recently completed pedestrian bridge over Elk Creek, the County's two miles of access improvements along Pebble Beach Drive and two miles of Coastal Trail being planned at Del Norte County's Point Saint George Heritage Area, a part of 11,000 acres of protected public land including Tolowa Dunes State Park and Department of Fish and Game's Lake Earl Wildlife Area.

### **Project History:**

Crescent City Harbor was built in a natural bay at Crescent Beach in the mid-1850s and grew along with the discovery of gold and the export of old growth redwood. Use of the harbor for timber export by boat peaked after World War II as supply of old growth redwood declined and more recently environmental protections began to increase.

Commercial fishing became a mainstay of the economy with timber, but this industry too has declined following its peak in the 1950s. In 1964, a powerful tsunami created by the Great Alaska Earthquake (magnitude 9.2) devastated much of Crescent City.

Subsequently, the Army Corps of Engineers dredged the harbor and deposited the spoils along the perimeter of the harbor creating present day Beachfront Park, a portion of the RV Park and the current waterfront north of the harbor. Concerns for declining fishing related revenue and interest in revitalizing the Harbor led to planning to expand the use of the Harbor.

The Conservancy has assisted Crescent City with waterfront revitalization and access efforts since 1984. Past projects include the Crescent City "B" Street Wharf, Battery Point Lighthouse, waterfront planning and a visitor destination study, and waterfront access such as along Howe Drive. In June 2002, the Conservancy authorized funds to Crescent City to conduct a feasibility analysis for the Harbor Trail segment of the City's Coastal Trail, and in 2005, with additional Conservancy support, the City constructed .28 miles of this Coastal Trail segment, a pedestrian bridge over Elk Creek, an interpretive kiosk, a restroom and a parking lot just north of the Harbor.

In 2003 the Conservancy provided funding for development of the Crescent City Harbor District Harbor Master Plan. Conceptual plans for revitalization of the Harbor were developed over a 25-month process led by a consultant team working with public input as well as cooperation between Crescent City Harbor District, the City of Crescent City, and the County of Del Norte. Adopted by the Harbor District in 2006, the Master Plan identifies coastal tourism and visitor-serving business as important components to build into the business plan for Crescent City Harbor. The Master Plan includes an implementation plan for improvements to existing public facilities including the reconfiguration of inner boat basin, replacement of restrooms, Americans with

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Disabilities Act (ADA) access improvements and infrastructure improvements such as the construction of the waterfront Promenade and an extension of the Coastal Trail.

The same year the Master Plan was adopted, a tsunami caused damage to the inner boat basin to such an extent that California's Office of Emergency Services (OES) provided \$15 million (75% of the funding necessary) to complete a redesign and construction of a new inner boat basin for the Harbor. Approximately \$4.9 million in additional grant funds to support the project were secured from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program in 2009. This substantial investment in the infrastructure of the Harbor gives testimony to the fact that fishing will remain an important feature of the economy and character of Del Norte. This multi-million dollar improvement is currently in the design phase and can be viewed as a springboard for improvements identified in the 2006 Harbor Master Plan.

The proposed Harbor Promenade Design project was under discussion with Conservancy staff and the Harbor District prior to the December 2008 freeze on new bond-funded projects. During the freeze, the Harbor District continued to make progress on the inner boat basin design work and also began investigating potential funding partners for implementation of the Coastal Trail and Harbor promenade. The Office of Emergency Services has provided \$1.4 million funding to the Harbor for administration, and coordination with the Phase I Conservancy grant will be matched by the Harbor staff using \$70,000 in OES funds. There is potential for a portion of the \$4.9 million in CDBG funds to be reallocated to support construction of the trail and promenade should cost savings be realized during the boat basin construction. In addition, the Local Transportation Commission has expressed interest in providing a potential match for construction of the multi-use trail and promenade.

Now that the Conservancy is in a position to consider funding the proposed project, the Harbor District is prepared to move forward with the search for a design and planning consulting firm to prepare harbor-wide design guidelines and to create a destination for public access in designing both the Crescent City Harbor Promenade and the Harbor's link of the California Coastal Trail.

**PROJECT FINANCING:**

Coastal Conservancy	\$ 685,000
Crescent City Harbor District (OES)	<u>\$ 70,000</u>
 Total Project Cost	 \$ 755,000

Conservancy funds for this project are expected to derive from the Conservancy's FY2008 allocation of Proposition 84 funds ("California Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006," Public Resources Code section 75001, et seq.). These funds may be used "to promote access to and enjoyment of" coastal resources in accordance with the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. See Public Resources

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Code section 75060. The proposed project will promote access to and enjoyment of the harbor waterfront in Crescent City by enabling the Harbor District to prepare the engineered plans and obtain the permits that are necessary for development of public accessways, restrooms and signs, and to prepare the design guidelines that are needed to insure that public walkways, waterfront development and public access signs encourage and enhance public access in the harbor. As discussed below, the project is consistent with Chapter 9 of Division 21.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

The proposed project will be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 9 (Public Resources Code sections 31400-31409) of the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the provision of a system of public accessways.

Funding the proposed project is consistent with the legislature's intent that the Coastal Conservancy have a principal role in the development of public accessways to and along the state's coastline, as indicated in Public Resources Code section 31400. Conservancy funding of the design guidelines for harbor development, standards for the Promenade, and a sign program is required to aid the Harbor District in providing the public with an enhanced coastal accessway, as provided in Public Resources Code § 31400.3.

Preparation of the Promenade standards and sign program will insure that the Promenade and accompanying signs are constructed in a manner that promotes and enhances public access. The design guidelines for harbor development are needed as part of revitalizing the Harbor, which will promote and enhance public access in the Harbor.

Consistent with Section 31400.1 and 31400.2, the proposed project will provide funds to a public entity, the Harbor District, to prepare the engineered plans and obtain the permits that are necessary for the development of a public walkway, with accompanying restrooms and signs, through Harbor District waterfront property. The walkway will provide views of the Battery Point Lighthouse and Crescent Beach, and will improve public access for regional and international tourists that visit the Crescent City harbor while traveling through Del Norte County between northern California and Oregon. Thus, the proposed project will serve greater than local public needs, as required by Public Resources Code section 31400.1.

Consistent with Section 31400.2, the amount of funding proposed for this project has been determined by the total amount of funding available for coastal public accessway projects, the fiscal resources of the Harbor District, the urgency of the project relative to other eligible projects, and the application of factors prescribed by the Conservancy for the purpose of determining project eligibility and priority in order to more effectively carry out the provision of the division. Discussion of the application of these factors is set forth in the next section of this report.

Pursuant to Section 31408, the conservancy "shall, in consultation with the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Coastal Commission, coordinate the development of the California Coastal Trail." The proposed project will support the Harbor District's

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planning and design efforts for 1.24 miles of the California Coastal Trail on Harbor District property, connecting to the Harbor North segment of the California Coastal Trail recently completed by the City of Crescent City with Conservancy support.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

Consistent with **Goal 1 – Objective A**, the proposed project will support reaching consensus on an alignment of the California Coastal Trail.

Consistent with **Goal 1 – Objective C**, the proposed project will design 1.24 miles of the California Coastal Trail and 1.42 miles of a Harbor waterfront walkway.

Consistent with **Goal 3 – Objective B** the proposed project will implement several of the waterfront restoration projects that are identified in the Crescent City Harbor District Master Plan (2006) and that will increase public access, tourism and economic vitality.

Consistent with **Goal 3 – Objective C**, the proposed project will design interpretive signage to support public access to and awareness of coastal resources.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted June 4, 2009, in the following respects:

#### **Required Criteria**

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Support of the public:** The project has strong support from elected officials including Congressman Mike Thompson, State Senator Sam Aanestad, Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro, the Del Norte Board of Supervisors, and the Crescent City City Council as well as the Elk Valley Rancheria and the Del Norte Chamber of Commerce. Letters of support are included in Exhibit 4.
4. **Location:** The proposed project is located in the coastal zone in Del Norte County.
5. **Need:** Conservancy funding is necessary to complete the planning and design work for the public access at Crescent City Harbor. Without Conservancy

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funding, the planned public access improvements cannot go forward.

6. **Greater-than-local interest:** The proposed project will provide plans to complete a 1.24-mile segment of the California Coastal Trail and create a 1.42-mile Promenade at the Crescent City Harbor adjacent to Del Norte County's only incorporated city. Improvements to public access throughout the harbor and connecting to Crescent Beach and the City of Crescent City will serve the greater-than-local interest of local community members and the growing number of travelers visiting between Oregon and northern California.
7. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The proposed Coastal Trail segment and waterfront Promenade are at an elevation of roughly 13 to 15 feet above sea level. If constructed, these coastal access improvements will remain more than 10 feet above the projected sea level rise of 16 inches by 2050 and will have limited vulnerability to sea level rise over the course of the Conservancy's 20-year grant agreement. Should sea level rise reach 59 inches by 2100, the access improvements will be approximately 8 to 11 feet above sea level.

### Additional Criteria

8. **Urgency:** A recent tsunami caused damage to Crescent City Harbor and there is great need for improvement to public access throughout the Harbor. The proposed project will enable the Harbor District to complete construction plans for public access in coordination with the inner boat basin redesign project being completed with funds from the Office of Emergency Services due to tsunami damage.
9. **Leverage:** The Crescent City Harbor District will provide a match of 9% for the proposed project, and when combined with the complimentary Inner Boat Basin redesign and construction project over \$23 million in improvements will be made at the Harbor.
10. **Readiness:** The Crescent City Harbor District is ready to hire a design and planning firm to complete the proposed project for Harbor public access improvements in the proposed project.
11. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See "Project History" above.
12. **Cooperation:** The proposed project will involve coordination between the Harbor District, the County and the City for Coastal Trail connections and coordination among multiple funders supporting improvements to the inner boat basin.
13. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** Should there be an increase in storm event frequency or severity as a result of climate change, the Harbor can anticipate heavy wave and wind action. The public access improvements in the proposed project will be engineered to withstand these types

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of impacts, to the extent feasible, in particular with the footings of the Promenade. Minimal native habitat remains on the highly developed Harbor property; landscaping design may include native plants appropriate to the type of heavy wind and rains that can be expected for the climate.

14. **Minimization of Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** As this phase is a design project and does not involve any construction, minimal greenhouse gas emissions are anticipated. The Harbor District will insure the harbor design guidelines, promenade standards, and public access designs and engineered plans will incorporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions minimization considerations, such as in the selection of the type and origin of walkway materials, use of solar power for lighting and other electrical needs, and use of green building design, where possible.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:**

The proposed project is located in the Coastal Zone in Del Norte County. The majority of the harbor area is located within Del Norte County and a small area is within the City of Crescent City. Both Del Norte County and the City of Crescent City have local coastal programs that were certified in the 1980s and are in the process of being updated. The Harbor is addressed in Crescent City Harbor segment of the Del Norte County Local Coastal Program (“Harbor LCP”). The proposed planning and design of public accessways and coastal access improvements at the Harbor is consistent with the relevant policies of the Harbor LCP and the City of Crescent City LCP.

The Harbor LCP contains policies supporting coastal public access and recreation. The land use plan portion of the Harbor LCP states: “As a viable source of economic activity – much of which is visitor-related – the Harbor seeks to maintain maximum accessibility to the public. . . . In planning for future development of the Harbor, provision of recreational and visitor-serving facilities is a major consideration.” The implementation plan portion of the Harbor LCP prohibits development from interfering with public access but acknowledges that public access should not be located at harbor-dependent uses where access would create a hazard for the public. See Harbor LCP, Harbor Area Public Access Provisions, section 21.47.030. The proposed project is consistent with these provisions in that it will provide, enhance and encourage public access through the Harbor in a safe manner. The City of Crescent City’s LCP also contains policies supporting public access, recreation, and visitor-serving facilities.

Public Access Section II, “General Conditions” subsection, states that “[a]lthough Crescent City’s existing General Plan contains no specific policy directly related to public access, it has always been an unwritten policy to protect, provide, and maintain public access to the shoreline.” And although Public Access Section VI, “Analysis,” recommends that the City of Crescent City adopt a policy of “Maintaining the Status Quo” for public access, it goes on to state that this policy involves the City “[recognizing] the importance of access to and along shoreline [*sic*],” and “[encouraging] the development of additional accessways” should the City find in the future that existing public accessways are inadequate to meet recreational needs.

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Recreation and Visitor-Serving Facilities Section III, “City Recreation Areas,” recognizes the existence and importance of pedestrian and bicycle paths to and around the harbor, and campgrounds in the vicinity. Section VI includes recommendations that the City “assure the preservation of areas which are zoned Open Space in a manner consistent with the uses allowed in Open Space areas,” and “continue its policy of designating land uses for recreational and visitor serving facilities, provided that, [among other things,] the fiscal integrity of the City is retained.”

Thus, the proposed project is consistent with the Del Norte County and Crescent City LCPs as it will enable the Harbor District to design improvements for public access, visitor-serving facilities and pedestrian and bicycle access on Harbor property.

The proposed project implements the Crescent City Harbor District Harbor Master Plan (2006), which was the result of a two-year planning effort to create a vision for the future of the Harbor. The Master Plan will inform the ongoing updates to the Harbor LCP and the City of Crescent City LCP. The Harbor Master Plan recommends development of the Harbor Design Guidelines, enhanced signage, a continuous Crescent City Waterfront Promenade, a Coastal Trail Extension through the Harbor, a network of walkways, open space, overlooks, visitor amenities, increased wheelchair accessibility, and integrated circulation improvements, to enhance public access, enjoyment and appreciation of California’s coastal resources.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:**

California Code of Regulations title 14, section 15262 states that a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions that have not yet been approved does not require the preparation of an EIR or negative declaration but does require the consideration of environmental factors. The proposed project consists of planning and design work, including the preparation of engineered plans, permit applications and environmental review documents for possible future action that has not yet been funded by the Conservancy (or approved by any other public entity). Accordingly, the proposed project does not require preparation of an EIR or negative declaration. There are no actions associated with the proposed project that raise environmental considerations. Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption for the project.