COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
January 29, 2014

SAN MATEO COUNTY SHORELINE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Project No. 14-002-01
Project Manager: Kelly Malinowski

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to $500,000, including a grant to San Mateo County of up to $220,000 and direct Conservancy expenditures of up to $280,000, to complete a coordinated Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for San Mateo County.

LOCATION: San Mateo County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Project Maps

Exhibit 2: Our Coast Our Future Maps

Exhibit 3: Bay Area King Tide Photos

Exhibit 4: Project Letters

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Section 31113 of the Public Resources Code:

"The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of up to $220,000 (two hundred twenty thousand dollars) to San Mateo County (SMC) and the direct expenditure by the Conservancy of up to $280,000 (two hundred eighty thousand dollars) to complete a sea level rise vulnerability assessment within San Mateo County for the San Francisco Bay shoreline and Pacific Ocean coastline from Half Moon Bay north to create coordinated shoreline resilience across jurisdictions within San Mateo County. This authorization is subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to disbursement of any funds to SMC, SMC shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy a work program, including a budget and schedule, and the name and proposed scope of work for any contractor to be retained by SMC.

2. SMC shall conduct the sea level rise vulnerability assessment project in close consultation with the Conservancy."

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 Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding climate change (Chapter 3).
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines last updated by the Conservancy on October 2, 2014."

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends that the Conservancy grant up to $220,000 to San Mateo County ("SMC") and authorize the direct expenditure by the Conservancy of up to $280,000 to complete a sea level rise vulnerability assessment ("Vulnerability Assessment") within San Mateo County for the San Francisco Bay shoreline and Pacific Ocean coastline from Half Moon Bay north. The Vulnerability Assessment will lay the groundwork for future shoreline resilience across jurisdictions within San Mateo County.

In a report developed for the State of California entitled, *"The Impacts of Sea Level Rise on the San Francisco Bay,"* the Pacific Institute identified San Mateo County as the county most at risk in the State of California for projected impacts from sea level rise, flooding and storms (Pacific Institute 2012). Areas in the County are already subject to inundation and flooding impacts due to King Tides and extreme storm events. In terms of replacement costs for buildings and contents, San Mateo County has $23 billion at risk on the bay shoreline and $910 million at risk along the ocean coast. The county's population makes up just 10% of those living in the Bay Area, yet the county is home to 40% of the population at risk in combined storm, flood, and sea level rise projections for the entire nine-county Bay Area (Pacific Institute 2012). In addition to San Mateo County's economy and population, projected impacts from sea level rise threaten San Mateo County's abundant natural resources, including its tidal marshes, creeks, and beaches, including 6.2% of California's existing coastal wetlands.

Protected natural areas can be found along both the Bay shoreline and Pacific coastline of San Mateo County, and the Conservancy has supported numerous natural resource protection and enhancement projects and public access projects along San Mateo County's coast and shoreline including the San Francisco Bay Trail, California Coastal Trail, Bair Island Restoration, and South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration Project. Considerable public attention has been drawn to the need to prepare for impacts due to climate change by two County-wide conferences on sea level rise held by San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine, California State Assemblyman Richard Gordon, and United States Congresswoman Jackie Speier.

The project will be managed jointly by SMC and the Conservancy. The Conservancy grant of up to $220,000 to SMC will support staff work, as well as limited funding for materials and other expenses. The $280,000 to be expended by the Conservancy will be used to coordinate the vulnerability assessment process, to further develop, refine and employ a mapping tool to inform the Vulnerability Assessment, and to conduct the vulnerability assessment and produce a report summarizing findings. Funds for tool development and refinement will be used to improve "Our Coast, Our Future," a suite of online maps and tools for climate change planning for the San Francisco Bay Area developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA") and U.S. Geological Survey ("USGS"), for use in San Mateo County's Vulnerability Assessment. Lastly, the Conservancy will retain engineering and environmental services consultants to produce the Vulnerability Assessment Report, which will describe the impacts of various rates of sea level rise to a variety of assets along the shoreline, such as major infrastructure, communities, and natural resources.

The Conservancy has engaged with the California Coastal Commission, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission ("BCDC") and other collaborators to undertake sea level rise resiliency planning at a countywide or regional scale. The Conservancy has a great deal to contribute to San Mateo County through lessons learned thus far from resiliency planning efforts in Humboldt County and from additional resiliency projects undertaken to date by the Conservancy along the California coastline and San Francisco Bay shoreline. In addition, resiliency planning projects, such as those in Humboldt and San Mateo Counties, afford the Conservancy the opportunity to develop expertise in such planning so that it can apply and share acquired information and best practices with other California coastal communities that face similar sea level rise vulnerability.

By granting a portion of the $500,000 project cost to SMC, this project will assist in developing internal staff expertise in San Mateo County for resiliency planning. The Conservancy's involvement with the project, through its staff and contractors, will provide needed regional collaboration and cooperation, and will bring additional technical and professional expertise to the project. Additionally, the Conservancy plays an important role in this effort as an advocate for the conservation of natural resources in the face of climate change impacts, as well as a proponent of green infrastructure adaptation approaches.

The proposed project will enable SMC and SCC to:

- Build existing sea level rise awareness and capacity in SMC through supporting staff work on the project in collaboration with the Conservancy, regional experts, and staff and elected officials from cities and special districts in the county.
- Complete the Vulnerability Assessment for SMC's San Francisco Bay shoreline and Pacific coastline from Half Moon Bay north by collecting and analyzing appropriate data on the vulnerability of assets in SMC to potential impacts from various rates of sea level rise.
- Develop an adaptation strategy framework that includes recommended next steps, possible funding sources, and example adaptation strategies to consider, which, in addition to capacity-building, will prepare SMC to continue resiliency planning efforts in the future.

The project will draw from the Vulnerability Assessment process steps used in BCDC's *Adapting to Rising Tides* project, and experience gained through projects funded by the Conservancy's Climate Ready Grant Program, the Ocean Protection Council's Local Coastal Program Sea-Level Rise Grant Program, and the Coastal Commission's Local Coastal Program Planning Grant Program.

The project will operate under the guidance of three separate groups: the Project Team, the Policy Working Group, and the Technical Working Group.

- The Project Team will consist of Conservancy representatives, SMC staff, and consultants to be retained by the Conservancy who will provide facilitation, tool development, and technical services and produce the vulnerability assessment report. The Project Management Team serves as the overall lead for the project and is charged with providing direction, planning meetings, coordination, and ensuring work is satisfactory and completed within deadlines throughout the project scope, as well as managing consultants, conducting the vulnerability assessment, and writing reports.
- The Policy Working Group, initiated during the early scoping of the proposed project, consists of elected officials and leadership from SMC, cities, special districts, utilities, and transit agencies, as well as representatives from the non-profit and business sectors. The Policy Working Group will meet infrequently to receive updates on progress and provide high-level feedback.
- The Technical Working Group will be the largest of the three groups, and will be made up of staff from SMC departments, the 20 cities in the county, special districts, and others with specific knowledge of assets in their respective jurisdictions. The Technical Working Group will facilitate data collection and dissemination between the group members, and serve as a great resource for the Project Team as sources of data to develop the Vulnerability Assessment.

The Project Team will also seek technical assistance from a small group of experts, including NOAA, USGS, BCDC and others. These experts will provide advice on the selection of climate scenarios, data sources and gaps, and use of "Our Coast Our Future". A public outreach plan will be developed as part of the Vulnerability Assessment project, in order to keep the public informed of progress and solicit feedback prior to release of the final report.

Site Description: San Mateo County includes a wide array of spectacular natural resources along 57.7-miles of open Pacific Ocean to the west, the San Francisco Bay shoreline to the east and 6.2% of the states' existing coastal wetlands. Three major creeks drain to the Bay: Colma Creek, San Bruno Creek and San Francisquito Creek (which also makes up the southern county line border between San Mateo and Santa Clara County). The County contains many near shore facilities of regional economic importance, including San Francisco International Airport (SFO), the Port of Redwood City, Pillar Point Harbor, and a number of transit corridor assets such as Millbrae Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Station that provides connectivity for BART, Caltrain, SamTrans, SFO, and the US 101 highway.

The project area for the Vulnerability Assessment is the San Francisco Bay shoreline in San Mateo County and the Pacific Ocean coastline from Half Moon Bay north to the San Francisco border. The project area for the Vulnerability Assessment does not include the stretch of San

Mateo County coastline south of Half Moon Bay since the Our Coast Our Future mapping tool to be used to conduct the vulnerability assessment, the most accurate current mapping tool to date, does not include data for this stretch of coastline.

Project History: Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Assemblyman Rich Gordon, and San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine convened two sea level rise conferences to raise awareness and begin a conversation on regional planning across San Mateo. The first was offered to the public in December 2013 and the second was held for area planners, agency heads and community organization leaders in June 2014. From these meetings, leaders identified three areas for further collective effort and called for working groups to be established to develop a vulnerability assessment, develop strategies to fund adaptation, and develop a structure to continue organizing across jurisdictional boundaries.

The Conservancy offered SMC support with the vulnerability assessment working group, including a facilitator from the Center for Collaborative Policy. The Conservancy and SMC held several scoping meetings to solicit input from the vulnerability assessment working group for the development of the proposed project. The scoping meetings also included presentations on the Adapting to Rising Tides (ART) project, "Our Coast Our Future", Bayside and Coastside flood data and map, the Sea Level Rise Guidance for Capital Planning, the Mission Creek Project in San Francisco, the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority SAFER Bay project, and the Marin County "Collaborative-SMART" assessment of coastal Marin County.

The project has support from a wide variety of community interests, area stakeholders, and elected representatives including Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Assemblymember Gordon, Assemblymember Ting, Assemblymember Mullin, State Senator Hill, State Senator Leno, San Mateo County Supervisor President Dave Pine; leadership from local, state, and federal agencies including the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), the California Coastal Commission (CCC), and the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the cities of Foster City, Redwood City, San Mateo, San Bruno, Pacifica, Half Moon Bay, and the San Francisquito Creek JPA; and such nonprofit organizations as the Committee for Green Foothills. Project letters are attached as Exhibit 4.

Prior to the current Conservancy project manager, the project was managed by Conservancy project manager Deborah Hirst, who has recently started a position with the grantee, the County of San Mateo, working as an aide in Supervisor Horsley's office. Funding under the proposed grant will go to the County of Mateo, but will be used by the County's Office of Sustainability, a department wholly separate from the office of Supervisor Hartley.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy

Grant to San Mateo County	$220,000
Direct Conservancy Expenditures	$280,000
Total Conservancy Funding:	**$500,000**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	$95,000
Project Total	**$595,000**

The anticipated source of Conservancy funds is the FY 2010-11 appropriation (re-appropriated in FY 2013-14) to the Conservancy of Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006.

This funding source may be used for: protection of beaches, bays and coastal waters and watersheds, as well as projects to protect and restore the natural habitat values of coastal waters and lands, pursuant to the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. The proposed project will assist in protecting San Mateo County's coastal beaches in and north of Half Moon Bay, as well the County's full San Francisco Bay shoreline, and their respective natural habitat values, by assessing the vulnerability of these areas and their natural resources to the projected impacts of sea level rise, and by enabling San Mateo County to develop an adaptation framework and strategies to increase the resiliency of San Mateo County's bay and shoreline to the impacts of climate change. In addition, as discussed below, the project is consistent with Chapter 3, Section 31113, of Division 21.

SMC is also anticipating support from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the amount of $95,000, through the USACE Interagency Flood Risk Management Project. SMC is expected to be one of two statewide projects to be funded under this project, and USACE funds are dependent upon Conservancy support for the project.

The project will be supported by staff from SMC (Department of Public Works, Office of Sustainability, and the Planning and Building Department), and a number of cities within the county. In-kind services from SMC are conservatively estimated at $50,000 for the proposed project which extends until December 2016. However, SMC has also committed to funding a Climate Resilience Specialist position for the County for an additional two years (FY 2017-2019) to carry out continued work on the project. The in-kind value of this is conservatively estimated at $213,333.

Additional in-kind services include staff time from a number of cities within the county, and staff assistance from BCDC and NOAA.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project will be undertaken pursuant to Section 31113 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding projects that address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within its jurisdiction.

The proposed project is consistent with Section 31113(a) since the project will address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within San Mateo County, and will provide an assessment of vulnerability of San Mateo County's shoreline, and its infrastructure and natural resources, to sea level rise. The proposed project is consistent with Section 31113 (b) since it involves a grant to San Mateo County for activities authorized pursuant to subdivision (a),

including a sea level rise Vulnerability Assessment. The project will maximize public benefit by undertaking forward-planning that will identify and prioritize the most vulnerable of the natural and physical infrastructure resources, the first step in developing approaches to protecting and preserving those resources against the impacts and potential impacts of climate change.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2013-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 7, Objective A,** the project will involve collaboration with public agencies to identify significant climate-related threats to San Mateo County's resources, as well as anticipated management challenges associated with implementing adaptation measures.

Consistent with **Goal 7, Objective B**, the project will result in a regional Vulnerability Assessment for sea level rise and extreme storm events and provide preliminary recommendations for a second phase project to develop strategies to address threats to coastal communities and public infrastructure in ways that protect natural resources and provide maximum public benefits.

Consistent with **Goal 7, Objective C,** the project will complete a regional county-wide Vulnerability Assessment of San Mateo County's coastal waterways (e.g. rivers and streams) and any upland habitat subject to flooding under current conditions or predicted sea level rise. Though an adaptation plan will not be included in this current scope, an adaptation strategy framework will lay the groundwork for San Mateo County to continue resiliency planning efforts in the future.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN:

The proposed project is consistent with the applicable Climate Change Policies contained in Part IV, Development of the Bay and Shoreline: Findings and Policies, of the San Francisco Bay Plan amended by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) in October 2011.

Climate Change Policy No. 2 states:

> When planning shoreline areas or designing larger shoreline projects, a risk assessment should be prepared by a qualified engineer and should be based on the estimated 100-year flood elevation that takes into account the best estimates of future sea level rise and current flood protection and planned flood protection that will be funded and constructed when needed to provide protection for the proposed project or shoreline area. A range of sea level rise projections for mid-century and end of century based on the best scientific data available should be used in the risk assessment. Inundation maps used for the risk assessment should be prepared under the direction of a qualified engineer. The risk assessment should identify all types of potential flooding, degrees of uncertainty, consequences of defense failure, and risks to existing habitat from proposed flood protection devices.

Consistent with Climate Change Policy No. 2, the proposed project will assess vulnerability to future sea level rise and current flood protection along the San Francisco Bay waterfront. The proposed project will assess risk using a range of sea level rise projections for mid-century and end of century based on the best scientific data available.

Climate Change Policy No. 4 states:

> To address the regional adverse impacts of climate change, undeveloped areas that are both vulnerable to future flooding and currently sustain significant habitats or species, or possess conditions that make the areas especially suitable for ecosystem enhancement, should be given special consideration for preservation and habitat enhancement and should be encouraged to be used for those purposes.

Preservation of significant habitat is a high priority for BCDC and the Conservancy. Consistent with Climate Change Policy No. 4, the proposed project will assess vulnerability to future sea level rise and current flood protection for natural areas along the San Francisco Bay waterfront, with special consideration for those areas especially suitable for ecosystem enhancement.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

The project area includes SMC's Pacific coastline from Half Moon Bay to the San Francisco border. Cities within SMC along this stretch of coastline include Half Moon Bay, Pacifica and Daly City as well as the coastline of San Mateo County's unincorporated area. San Mateo County has two Local Coastal Programs (LCPs), one is the Half Moon Bay LCP and the other is the Midcoast LCP, which covers this unincorporated area of San Mateo County between the city of Half Moon Bay and Pacifica.

Consistent with the Midcoast LCP's Hazards Component, the project will identify coastal vulnerabilities to impacts from projected sea level rise and thus enable SMC to include coastal areas subject to current and future flooding and other sea level rise impacts in SMC's definition and designation of hazard areas within the Midcoast LCP, (*County of San Mateo Local Coastal Program Policies: 7.1-7.14* 2013). More specifically, a goal of the Vulnerability Assessment is to identify opportunities for natural shoreline infrastructure as an adaptation measure in the face of sea level rise impacts, which is consistent with the Midcoast LCP's Component 9.12, Limiting Protective Shoreline Structures:

a. Permit construction of shoreline structures such as retaining walls, groins, revetments, and breakwaters only in accordance with the following conditions when: (1) necessary to serve coastal-dependent uses, to protect existing development, or to protect public beaches in danger of erosion, (2) designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply, and (3) non-structural methods (e.g., artificial nourishment) have been proved to be infeasible or impracticable. (*County of San Mateo Local Coastal Program Policies: 7.1-7.14* 2013).

b. Protect existing roadway facilities which provide public access to beaches and recreational facilities when alternative routes are not feasible and when

> protective devices are designed in accordance with the requirements of this component and other LCP policies. (*County of San Mateo Local Coastal Program Policies: 7.1-7.14* 2013).

Consistent with the Half Moon Bay LCP Land Use Plan's Chapter 4 on Hazards, the project will identify the vulnerabilities of Half Moon Bay's coastline to sea level rise impacts, and make recommendations, including the identification of opportunities for natural shoreline infrastructure as an adaptation measure. This project will thus help the City of Half Moon Bay to determine any coastal areas in need of protective shoreline infrastructure where natural shoreline infrastructure is not feasible, which is consistent with the Half Moon Bay LCP Land Use Plan's Seawall and Shoreline Structures Policy 4-1:

> Seawalls and cliff-retaining structures shall not be permitted unless the City determines they are necessary for preservation of existing structures, and has determined that there are not other less environmentally damaging alternatives for protection of existing development. If such structures are permitted, they shall be designed to preserve the maximum amount of existing beach, to ensure lateral access along the shoreline, and to assure that all existing endangered development within the area of the improvement is protected as part of the project; such structures shall not be designed so as to encompass an area larger than that necessary to protect existing structures. An applicant for such a structure shall include a geologic report indicating that the structure will succeed in stabilizing that portion of the shoreline which is subject to sever erosion and will not aggravate erosion in other shoreline areas. (*City of Half Moon Bay Local Coastal Program: Land Use Plan Policies: 4.3 Seawall and Shoreline Structures: 4-1* 1976).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed projects are consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted October 2, 2014 in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** By assessing vulnerability to sea level rise and preparing an adaptation strategy framework that will lay the groundwork for San Mateo County to continue resiliency planning efforts in the future, the project will promote and implement several state plans including:
    - *California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report* (2013 Draft; Governor's Office of Planning and Research), that calls for efforts to increase ecosystem services and biodiversity and resilience of natural systems to recover from disruption. As a part of this project, the vulnerability of natural systems to sea level rise impacts will be

assessed, with the goal of increasing the resilience of these natural systems in subsequent phases of the project.

- *CA Climate Adaptation Strategy/Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk Plan* (July 2014; California Natural Resources Agency), which proposes that California communities assess vulnerability and provide recommendations for developing shoreline and habitat resilience in order to safeguard species and ecosystems from climate risks, and promotes collaborative and iterative processes for crafting and refining climate risk management strategies. The proposed project will include a vulnerability assessment with the goal of achieving shoreline and habitat resilience, and includes a collaborative, regional process while developing the vulnerability assessment in anticipation of subsequent phases which will include adaptation measures.
- *California Water Action Plan* (January 2014; California Natural Resources Agency), which sets forth policies to protect and restore coastal estuaries and which under "action number four, protect and restore important ecosystems," proposes: "…in anticipation of the effects of climate change on the timing, volume and temperate of water flows, activities to protect and restore the resiliency of our ecosystems will help support fish and wildlife populations, improve water quality, and restore natural system functions, (p. 9). The project will achieve these objectives by laying the groundwork for adaptation strategies and resilience building efforts to protect the San Mateo County bay shoreline and coastline ecosystems.

4. **Support from the public:** The project has support from federal, state, and local elected officials including Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Assemblymember Gordon, Assemblymember Ting, Assemblymember Mullin, State Senator Hill, State Senator Leno, San Mateo County Supervisor President Dave Pine; leadership from local, state, and federal agencies including the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), the California Coastal Commission (CCC), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the cities of Foster City, Redwood City, San Mateo, San Bruno, Pacifica, Half Moon Bay, and the San Francisquito Creek JPA; and such nonprofits organizations as the Committee for Green Foothills, as well as stakeholders from the public, non-profit organizations, and the private sectors. See Exhibit 4 for project letters.
5. **Location:** The project will be undertaken in San Mateo County, within the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program area.
6. **Need:** Without the proposed Conservancy funding, the proposed project would not be possible and the opportunity for potential matching funds from other sources would be lost, including donated staff time from cities within the county, SMC and the California Department of Water Resources, as well as participation of state and federal and state agencies and organizations. Additionally, San Mateo County has applied for additional project support in the amount of $95,000 from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Interagency Flood Risk management Program, which is dependent upon Conservancy funding.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** The proposed Vulnerability Assessment and adaptation strategy framework, which will include example adaptation strategies, will benefit visitors, residents,

and businesses operating in San Mateo County. Results from the Vulnerability Assessment, and the associated adaptation strategy framework, may also be of interest to other California counties along the coast or San Francisco Bay shoreline.

8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The proposed project will produce a Vulnerability Assessment including studies related to current conditions and future sea level rise in San Mateo County. The proposed project will consider sea level rise as a condition to be addressed in future adaptation strategies to promote shoreline resilience. The Pacific Institute identifies San Mateo County as having $23 billion in buildings and contents at risk due to 1.4 meters of sea level rise, the most vulnerable county in California (Pacific Institute 2012). NOAA's Our Coast, Our Future shoreline maps indicate significant portions of San Mateo County property will be submerged by projected inundation at 16 inches (1.3 feet) and 55 inches (4.6 feet) of sea level rise.

Additional Criteria

9. **Resolution of more than one issue:** The Vulnerability Assessment developed through the proposed project will address the need to protect shoreline natural resources and public access, in addition to identifying key risks to infrastructure assets from sea level rise impacts.
10. **Leverage**: See the "Project Financing" section above.
11. **Conflict resolution:** The project will address multi-jurisdictional planning for vulnerability to sea level rise in a county that lacks one central water and utility provider or a funded countywide flood management district. The resulting Vulnerability Assessment will produce a framework for coordinated planning around sea level rise as well as providing initial assets to consider for development of multi-benefit flood infrastructure and public access projects, including potential segments of San Francisco Bay Trail and California Coastal Trail.
12. **Readiness:** SMC and Conservancy staff are ready to undertake the proposed project, and there is significant willingness from many city and county staff to participate.
13. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** The Conservancy has made a strong investment in regional planning for sea level rise through the Climate Ready Program, and the proposed project will build on two San Mateo County Climate Ready projects including planning for San Bruno and Colma Creeks adjacent to San Francisco International Airport and San Franciscquito Creek on the border with Santa Clara County.
14. **Cooperation**: Numerous SMC departments, the Conservancy, and up to twenty cities and special districts within San Mateo County will engage in the Vulnerability Assessment.
14. **Minimization of Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The proposed project will produce an assessment of vulnerability to sea level rise for future adaptation strategies development and planning activities for the Bay shoreline and Pacific Ocean coastline. The Vulnerability Assessment plan development will not have significant impact on production of Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed sea level rise Vulnerability Assessment is statutorily and categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. §§15000 et seq.). The proposed Vulnerability Assessment is statutorily exempt pursuant to Section 15262 in that it will involve feasibility and planning analysis for possible future action that has not yet been adopted, approved or funded and the Assessment will include consideration of environmental factors. The Vulnerability Assessment is likewise categorically exempt under Section 15306 to the extent that it involves basic data collection and resource evaluation activities. Staff will file a Notice of Exemption upon approval of the project.