

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
December 19, 2019

**CLIMATE READY GRANTS**

Project Nos. 19-040-01, 19-041-01, 19-042-01, 19-043-01  
Project Manager: Dan Hossfeld and Mary Small

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$1,595,470 to two nonprofit organizations and two public agencies for Climate Ready projects that address the effects of climate change on coastal resources and communities and facilitate reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

**LOCATION:** Various locations in coastal watersheds of California and in the counties of the San Francisco Bay Area (Exhibit 1).

**PROGRAM CATEGORY:** Climate Change

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EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Maps](#)

Exhibit 2: [Letters of Support](#)

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31100 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed one million five hundred and ninety-five thousand four hundred and seventy dollars (\$1,595,470) to two nonprofit organizations and two public agencies for four projects that address climate change impacts and facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as follows:

- County of Marin: Five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) to acquire private land at Bucks Landing in Marin County (Marin County’s Assessor’s Parcel Nos. 186-010-20 and 180-171-11) to create a public shoreline park.
- The Bay Foundation: Two hundred ninety-eight thousand, one hundred and twelve dollars (\$298,112) to restore coastal dune habitat at Manhattan Beach to enhance habitat and increase sea level rise resiliency in Los Angeles County.

- The City of Carlsbad: Four hundred ninety-eight thousand and seventy-five dollars (\$498,075) to plan a managed retreat project for South Carlsbad Boulevard in San Diego County.
- Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation: Two hundred ninety-nine thousand two hundred and eighty-three dollars (\$299,283) to plan relocation of parking and public access facilities at Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve in San Diego County.

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

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

The Bay Foundation shall also submit the following for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer prior to commencement of its project:

4. Evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
5. Evidence that the grantee has entered into agreements sufficient to enable the grantee to implement, operate, and maintain the project.

Authorization of funding to Marin County for the Bucks Landing acquisition is subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the disbursement of funds for the Bucks Landing acquisition, the grantee shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Officer:
  - All relevant acquisition documents for the acquisition including, without limitation, the appraisal, purchase and sale agreement, deed, escrow instructions, environmental or hazardous materials assessment, and title report; and
  - A baseline conditions report
2. The grantee shall pay no more than fair market value for the property, as established in an appraisal approved by the Executive Officer.
3. The property acquired under this authorization shall be managed and operated for habitat and park purposes. The property shall be permanently dedicated to those purposes by an appropriate instrument approved by the Executive Officer.
4. Conservancy funding shall be acknowledged by erecting and maintaining a sign on the property or in a nearby publicly-viewable area, the design and location of which are to be approved by the Executive Officer.

In carrying out each project, each grantee shall comply with all applicable requirements associated with disbursements from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), including all requirements set forth in the Air Resources Board's GGRF Funding Guidelines."

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 Section 31113 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding addressing climate change and potential climate change impacts. The authorization is further consistent with Chapter 4.5 which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to projects located in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that address the resource and recreational goals of the San Francisco Bay area, Chapter 5.5 which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to improve coastal and marine habitats, and Chapter 9 which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to develop, operate, and manage lands for public access purposes.
2. The proposed projects are consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project funds an accessway that will serve more than local needs.
4. Each nonprofit organization grantee proposed under this authorization is organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and each of their purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code."

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**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Staff recommends that the Conservancy authorize disbursement of up to \$1,595,470 to two nonprofits and two public agencies for four projects that increase resilience of coastal resources and communities to the impacts of sea level rise. These projects are located along the coast, in coastal watersheds and within the San Francisco Bay Area. The projects were the highest-ranking projects in the Conservancy's sixth Climate Ready grant round. One additional project, the Point Pinos Trail Project, is recommended for funding up to \$1 million from this Climate Ready Grant Round, and will be presented in a separate staff recommendation.

This grant round prioritizes projects that include managed retreat, natural shoreline infrastructure, living shorelines and/or habitat enhancement to increase shoreline resilience to sea level rise. The Conservancy solicited projects in spring of 2019 and received 11 applications requesting more than \$6.1 million in funding. This sixth round of Climate Ready grants will be funded by state cap-and-trade proceeds, which are deposited in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) and administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). These GGRF funds were appropriated to the Conservancy in 2018 for its Climate Ready Program.

The Conservancy's Climate Ready Program encourages local governments and non-governmental organizations to prepare for a changing climate by advancing planning and implementation of on-the-ground actions that reduce GHG emissions, sequester carbon, or lessen the future impacts of climate change on California's coastal communities, infrastructure and natural resources.

In order to meet GGRF's legislative purposes, projects must (1) facilitate the achievement of reductions of GHG emissions and further the purposes of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and related statutes, and (2) where feasible, include additional co-benefits, such as investment in disadvantaged communities and economic, environmental and public health benefits to the state. In the expenditure plan for these Climate Ready funds, these projects were determined to facilitate GHG reductions by planning for relocation of development (managed retreat) and by restoring wetlands and coastal habitats and protecting coastal development. Projects that increase resilience to rising sea level will reduce future flooding and associated cleanup and rebuilding, thus facilitating GHG emission reductions.

Two of the recommended projects (**Bucks Landing Acquisition, Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan**) benefit disadvantaged communities,<sup>1</sup> and include environmental and public health co-benefits. Conservancy staff's goal in selecting projects to recommend for funding was that at least 35% of total available GGRF funding be used for projects located in or benefitting disadvantaged communities. Round 6 has fallen short of this goal as projects that are located in and benefit disadvantaged communities account for 30% of the total funding recommended for this round.

Staff recommends funding the following four projects for the sixth round of the Climate Ready Program. One project is an acquisition of private land with potential for wetland restoration and managed retreat, one project will implement natural strategies to improve resiliency to sea level rise, and the remaining two projects will plan for managed retreat at vulnerable coastal sites. These projects are arranged by latitude from north to south, with a description of the project type and how it is consistent with the funding purposes. Each individual project summary includes the grantee; project name; recommended funding amount; geographic region; and a brief project description.

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<sup>1</sup>For purposes of GGRF, the terms "disadvantaged communities" and "low income communities," are defined at Health and Safety Code Sections 39711 and 39713. In this staff report, the term "disadvantaged communities" encompasses both disadvantaged and low-income communities within the GGRF definitions. Section 39711 calls on the California Environmental Protection Agency to identify disadvantaged communities for purposes of GGRF. Disadvantaged communities are identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency as the top 25% most impacted census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 3.0. Low-income communities are defined as the census tracts that are either at or below 80% of the statewide median income, or at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the California Department of Housing and Community Development's 2016 State Income Limits. For more information, see: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/communityinvestments.htm>.

**County of Marin**

**\$500,000**

**Bucks Landing Acquisition**

**San Francisco Bay Area**

Marin County will purchase the property known as “Bucks Landing”, San Rafael, Marin County (Marin County’s Assessor’s Parcel Nos. 186-010-20 and 180-171-11) depicted in Exhibit 1. Acquisition of the 32-acre property will allow Marin County to incorporate the property into the Marin County Park’s jurisdiction and create a public park on the shores of the creek that has access to the shoreline and the creek for water-oriented recreation. The County is also committed to begin planning for a climate-resilient demonstration project onsite, including managed retreat and habitat enhancement components. The County has a purchase agreement with a private landowner for the acquisition in place.

The acquisition of this parcel will facilitate the planning and implementation of a climate-resiliency demonstration project on a likely highly trafficked Marin County Parks property. Wetland restoration on site and conservation of natural lands into perpetuity will foster greenhouse gas emission reductions. Co-benefits of the project include conservation of natural habitat from development, protection of protected species habitat, and facilitation of public access to the bay, and community engagement at a demonstration site.

Marin County Parks has identified this site as an opportunity for a climate-resiliency demonstration project due to its low-lying location along tidally-influenced Gallinas Creek. The property includes developed lowlands (a boat launch and facilities), native saltmarsh, and upland open space. The developed lowlands and native saltmarsh areas are likely to be affected by sea level rise, and have been identified as key components in the managed retreat planning process.

**Proposed Funds**

Coastal Conservancy	\$500,000
County of Marin, Measure A	\$1,090,000
<u>County of Marin, General Fund</u>	<u>\$9,490</u>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$1,599,490</b>

**The Bay Foundation**

**\$298,112**

**Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration Project**

**South Coast**

This project will create an innovative protected dune system at Manhattan Beach in Los Angeles County. Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation (d.b.a. The Bay Foundation) will restore approximately 3 acres of existing dunes by removal of non-native vegetation, planting of native vegetation, and installation of fencing and educational features in collaboration with LA County Department of Beaches and Harbors and the City of Manhattan Beach, the landowner. Restoration of beach dunes offer a last line of protection from storm surge and sea level rise for vulnerable infrastructure as found in the Los Angeles County Public Beach Sea-Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (LAC-SLRVA). The LAC-SLRVA also found that with no intervention, Manhattan Beach is expected to erode from 420 feet wide to under 70 feet wide by 2100 due to sea level rise and storm erosion.

This project offers a nature-based method of sea level rise protection and carbon sequestration – no heavy equipment or machinery will be operated to accomplish the goals of this project. Native plantings and restoration will increase the carbon sequestration potential for the dune system. Public access will not be impacted by this project. The project has potential to provide a wide array of benefits, including providing habitat for endangered shorebirds and native plants; sequestering carbon; and protecting homes, roads, and infrastructure against storm surge, sea level rise, and erosion of Manhattan Beach. This project will incorporate resilient shoreline design and operate as a demonstration project for the millions of annual visitors to learn about nature-based solutions to sea level rise through educational and recreational opportunities.

**Proposed Funds**

Coastal Conservancy	\$298,112
<u>The Bay Foundation</u>	<u>\$38,000</u>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$332,459</b>

LA County Department of Beaches and Harbors and the City of Manhattan Beach will each provide in-kind labor hours with an estimated value of \$3,000.

**The City of Carlsbad**

**\$498,075**

**The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project**

**South Coast**

The City of Carlsbad will lead a planning project incorporating managed retreat and long-term sea level rise adaptation of public infrastructure and coastal resources. South Carlsbad Boulevard, a section of the Pacific Coast Highway, is a heavily trafficked route along the coast in Carlsbad, San Diego County. This southbound road is highly vulnerable to flooding and erosion and has been closed due to storm events.

The proposed project will plan for climate adaptation for this vulnerable stretch of coastal infrastructure. The project will facilitate greenhouse gas emission reductions through habitat

enhancement and development of non-vehicular transit options expected from the planning process. The project area includes both the City of Carlsbad and State Parks jurisdiction – South Carlsbad State Beach and Campground.

Past storm events have resulted in the need for extended rock revetments placed under emergency permits from the California Coastal Commission. The project will include planning for the retreat of this southbound road by presenting alternatives and a 30% design for the new roadway which will incorporate non-motorized transportation lanes. The City will also facilitate a stakeholder process to identify opportunities for use at the site of the road retreat, which is expected to include public access and recreation as well as ecosystem enhancements. The Center for Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation (CCCIA) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography is partnering on the project and will provide advanced localized sea-level rise predictions and models of cliff and beach retreat.

This project will be a demonstration of a climate adaptation project involving partnership between scientists, resource managers, and decision-makers. The proposed project will have multiple benefits for habitat and climate-adaptive infrastructure protection.

**Proposed Funds:**

Coastal Conservancy	\$ 498,075
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The City of Carlsbad will provide in-kind staff time with an estimated value of \$82,190.

**Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation**

**\$299,283**

**Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan**

**South Coast**

The Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Foundation in collaboration with California State Parks will lead a planning project incorporating managed retreat and long-term climate resiliency strategies into a plan for future public access at Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. The public access infrastructure in question along the Pacific Coast Highway in San Diego County is highly trafficked and already highly vulnerable to repeated flooding and erosion caused by storm events. These events will increase in frequency and severity due to sea level rise.

The proposed project will plan for relocation of the parking lot in State Parks jurisdiction that is currently vulnerable to sea level rise, and the public access infrastructure associated with the lot (restrooms, beach access, interpretive signage). The project will facilitate greenhouse gas emission reductions through the design of natural shoreline infrastructure to increase climate resilience, and through the habitat enhancement for Diegan coastal sage scrub and southern foredunes areas that support special-status species. The parking lot occupies historic tidal wetland, coastal dune, and coastal sage scrub habitat.

Past storm events have resulted in major erosion on the beach access infrastructure, causing unreliable access for people with disabilities to Torrey Pines State Beach and the California Coastal Trail. The project will include planning for preserved public access as well as relocation of the vulnerable infrastructure to a more resilient location.

This project will be a demonstration of a climate adaptation project involving partnership between non-profits, public agencies, and local stakeholders. Additionally, State Parks is actively identifying other facilities that must consider retreat, and this project will serve as a pilot and framework for statewide consideration.

**Proposed Funds**

Coastal Conservancy \$ 299,283

California State Parks will provide in-kind staff time, volunteer time, and equipment with an estimated value of \$10,000.

**Site Description:** All of the projects serve a coastal region or coastal watersheds of the state, and/or are within one of more of the nine counties under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program. See Exhibit 1 for regional maps depicting the locations of the projects.

**Grantee Qualifications:** All grantees have capacity to manage a state grant, qualified staff or contractors to carry out the project activities, and a record of success completing similar projects.

**Project History:** California is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Temperatures are becoming warmer; sea levels are rising; heat waves and wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe; and precipitation patterns are becoming more variable (California’s Fourth Climate Assessment, 2018). These impacts are projected to become more severe over the next century, and they will disproportionately affect vulnerable communities that already experience social, racial, health, and economic inequities (Safeguarding California, 2018).

In recognition of the urgent need to help local governments, ports and non-governmental organizations prepare for a changing climate, SB 1066 (Lieu) was signed in 2012, giving the Conservancy explicit authority to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the Conservancy’s jurisdiction. This legislation enables the Conservancy to award grants for projects that reduce GHG emissions or address extreme weather events, sea level rise, storm surge, beach and bluff erosion, salt water intrusion, flooding, and other hazards that threaten ports, harbors, coastal communities, infrastructure and natural resources. The Conservancy established its Climate Ready program to address the climate change impacts identified in SB 1066, and give priority to climate change mitigation and adaptation projects that maximize public benefits.



The Conservancy has held five prior rounds of Climate Ready Grants since 2013. Since 2013, the Conservancy has received proposals requesting approximately \$50 million in Conservancy funds. The Conservancy has funded 57 projects totaling approximately \$11 million in Conservancy funds. Past funded projects include sea level rise planning, urban greening, carbon farming and natural shoreline infrastructure planning and implementation projects.

This sixth round of Climate Ready grants was made possible by an appropriation of GGRF for the Climate Ready program. The solicitation was released on April 25, 2019. The focus of the sixth round of grants was on projects that plan or implement managed retreat projects for public infrastructure or that plan or implement natural infrastructure projects. The Conservancy received 11 applications requesting over \$6.1 million. Of these, five are recommended for funding under this grant round, one of which is described in a separate staff recommendation for the Conservancy’s December 19, 2019 meeting. The recommendation to fund the other 4 highly ranked projects for a total of \$1,595,470 is based on funding availability and prioritization of projects using the Conservancy’s Climate Ready criteria and CARB’s Funding Guidelines.

**PROJECT FINANCING**

<b>Coastal Conservancy</b>	<b>\$1,595,470</b>
<b>Other Funding</b>	<b>\$1,399,510</b>
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$2,994,980</b>

This sixth round of Climate Ready grants is funded by a 2018 appropriation of GGRF funds. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Investment Plan and Communities Revitalization Act (Health and Safety Code (HSC) Sections 39710 – 39723) requires that GGRF funds be used to (1) facilitate the achievement of reductions of GHG emissions consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (HSC Sections 38500 *et seq*), and (2) to the extent feasible, achieve other co-benefits, such as maximizing economic, environmental and public health benefits, directing investment to disadvantaged communities, and lessening the impacts of climate change on the state’s communities, economy, and environment. (HSC 39712(b)). The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 sets forth (among other things) certain GGRF funding priorities (HSC Section 38590.1).

### **Bucks Landing Acquisition**

The Bucks Landing Acquisition is consistent with the requirements for use of GGRF funds because this project facilitates the reduction of GHG emissions associated with land and natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)). In addition, the project will lessen the impacts and effects of climate change on the state's communities and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

This project is consistent with GGRF funding priorities in the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 by employing climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)).

### **Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration Project**

The Manhattan Beach project is consistent with the requirements for use of GGRF funds because the project facilitates the reduction of GHG emissions associated with natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)). It also supports programs implemented by a nonprofit organization coordinating with a local government (HSC Section 39712(c)(6)), supports the research, development, and deployment of innovative measures and practices (HSC Section 39172(c)(7)), and will lessen the effects of climate change on the state's communities, economy and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

The project is consistent with GGRF funding priorities by implementing climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)).

### **The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project**

The South Carlsbad project is consistent with the requirements for use of GGRF funds because the project facilitates the reduction of GHG emissions associated with natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)). It also supports programs implemented by a local agency coordinating with a local government (HSC Section 39712(c)(6)) and supports the research, development, and deployment of innovative measures and practices (HSC Section 39172(c)(7)), and will lessen the effects of climate change on the state's communities, economy and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

The project is consistent with GGRF funding priorities by planning climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)).

### **Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan**

The Torrey Pines State Preserve project is consistent with the requirements for use of GGRF funds because the project facilitates the reduction of GHG emissions associated with natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)). It also supports the research, development, and deployment of innovative measures and practices (HSC Section

39172(c)(7)) and will lessen the effects of climate change on the state's communities, economy and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

The project is consistent with GGRF funding priorities by planning climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)).

### **GGRF Investment Plan**

Pursuant to HSC Section 39716, this round of Climate Ready grants is consistent with the Third GGRF Investment Plan: Fiscal Years 2019-2022 (Investment Plan), which sets GGRF's funding goals. The current Investment Plan prioritizes GGRF funding for natural resources, urban greening, climate adaptation and resiliency, and climate research (Investment Plan, pgs. 19-25). Pursuant to the Investment Plan, this round of Climate Ready grants is also consistent with the state's climate goals, which include improving equity, achieving environmental justice, supporting capacity building, and increasing community engagement (Investment Plan, pgs. 4-13).

### **GGRF Funding Guidelines**

CARB is directed by the state legislature to administer the GGRF funds and to develop funding guidelines to implement the GGRF statutory regime (HSC Section 39715). Consistent with the CARB 2018 Funding Guidelines, this round of Climate Ready grants meets the following required guiding principles for GGRF programs:

- Facilitate GHG emission reductions and further the purposes of AB 32 and related statutes
- Target investments in and benefiting priority populations, with a focus on maximizing disadvantaged community benefits
- Maximize economic, environmental, and public health co-benefits to the State
- Foster job creation and job training, wherever possible
- Avoid potential substantial burdens to disadvantaged communities and low-income communities
- Ensure transparency and accountability and provide public access to program information.

Consistent with the Funding Guidelines, this round of Climate ready grants also meets the following recommended guiding principles for GGRF programs:

- Encourage projects that contribute to other State climate goals
- Coordinate investments and leverage funds where possible to provide multiple benefits and to maximize benefits.

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

All of the recommended projects would be undertaken pursuant to Section 31113 of Chapter 3 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, which authorizes the Conservancy to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the Conservancy's jurisdiction (Section 31113(a)).

Pursuant to Section 31113(b), the Conservancy is authorized to award grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to undertake projects that include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and addressing extreme weather events, sea level rise, flooding, and other coastal hazards that threaten coastal communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. Consistent with this section, the proposed authorization awards grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to undertake the projects described in the "Project Summary" section, which maximize public benefits by facilitating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, reducing coastal hazards due to sea level rise, enhancing coastal wetlands and natural lands, and conserving biodiversity.

**Bucks Landing Acquisition**

The Bucks Landing Acquisition project would also be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31160-31165, which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to projects located in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that address the resource and recreational goals of the San Francisco Bay area. The project is consistent with Section 31162(b), which sets the goal of protection, restoration, and enhancement of natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional importance. The project is considered a priority for the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program consistent with Section 31163(c), as the project provides for opportunities for benefits that could be lost if the project is not quickly implemented, and substantial matching funds support the acquisition. The project will preserve 32 acres of habitat, facilitate creation of a new park and public access site, and provide a location for a future San Francisco Bay Water Trail site.

**Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration**

The Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration Project would also be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 5.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Section 31220, which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to improve coastal and marine habitats as follows:

Pursuant to Section 31220(b)(2), the Conservancy may undertake projects to protect and restore coastal habitats if the project "protects or restores fish and wildlife habitat within coastal and marine waters and coastal watersheds." Consistent with this section, the proposed project will implement restoration and enhancement of coastal dune habitat for wildlife, including listed species.

Pursuant to Section 31220(b)(4), the Conservancy may award grants to protect and restore coastal habitats if the project “contributes to the reestablishment of natural erosion and sediment cycles.” Consistent with this section, the proposed project will restore coastal sand dune habitat and foster the reestablishment of sediment cycles on Manhattan Beach.

Section 31220(c) states that “projects funded pursuant to this section shall include a monitoring and evaluation component.” The proposed project will include post-restoration monitoring to assess restoration success and identify needs for maintenance and adaptive management.

Consistent with section 31220(a), the Conservancy consulted with the State Water Resources Control Board in the development of this grant to ensure consistency the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan). In addition, the project is consistent with the Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (GLAC IRWM) by addressing three objectives identified in the plan; enhancing habitat, reducing flood risk, and addressing climate change. The project is also consistent with the GLAC IRWM South Bay Subregional Plan due to the restoration of native habitat.

### **South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation and Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation**

The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project and the Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan would also be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Section 31400.1, which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to develop, operate, and manage lands for public access purposes to and along the coast.

Section 31400 states the Legislature’s intent that the Conservancy play a principal role in the implementation of a system of public accessways to and along the state’s coastline. Both proposed projects listed above will be funded by the Conservancy to implement public access objectives, as more specifically described in the Access Program Standards below.

Section 31400.2 states that the Conservancy may determine the amount of funding for coastal public accessway projects dependent on factors prescribed by the Conservancy in order to carry out the provisions of the division, and the Conservancy may fund the total cost of initial development of public accessways by non-profit organizations.

Section 31400.3 authorizes the Conservancy to provide such assistance as is required to aid public agencies and nonprofit organizations in establishing a system of public coastal accessways, and related functions necessary to meet the objectives of this division. Both proposed projects listed above are consistent with these sections as the projects will include alternatives for public access at each site into the future while incorporating sea level rise projections.

In addition, Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan would be undertaken pursuant to Chapter 9, Section 31408 which states that the Conservancy shall work with

relevant public agencies and departments to plan and implement projects supporting completion of the California Coastal Trail.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ACCESS PROGRAM STANDARDS:**

**Standard No. 1, Protect Public and Coastal Resources:** The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project and the Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan will plan for the protection of public access in future sea level rise scenarios.

**Standard No. 2, Correct Hazards:** The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project and the Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan will prepare plans for highly-used sites to minimize the future hazard of flooding from sea level rise.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#)**

**GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

The four projects proposed for funding assist the Conservancy in meeting a number of its Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives. Relevant Goals and Objectives are listed below each of the proposed projects. Please see the "Project Summary" section, above, for how each proposed project meets the relevant goal(s) and objective(s).

All projects were selected to advance **Goal 8** of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, to enhance the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

**Bucks Landing Acquisition**

Bucks Landing Acquisition is consistent with **Goal 8, Objective C**, which seeks to implement projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts. Acquisition and subsequent park creation onsite will increase the coastal resiliency of the nearby community. The project is further consistent with **Goal 2, Objective G**, which seeks to acquire land to allow for development of new coastal accessways. The site will be converted to a County park, and will be a future site for the San Francisco Bay Water Trail. The project is further consistent with **Goal 6, Objective D**, which seeks to implement projects that preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains. The acquisition will preserve 32 acres of a coastal watershed. The project is additionally consistent with **Goal 12, Objective A**, which seeks to protect tidal wetlands, riparian habitat, and subtidal habitat. The project is further consistent with **Goal 13, Objective C**, which seeks to complete acquisition projects that increase amount of land accessible to the public. The project is further consistent with **Goal 16, Objective B**, which seeks to increase the resilience to climate change impacts of communities along the coast of California or in the San Francisco Bay Area that lack capacity due to systemic inequities. The acquisition is within a Low-Income Community as defined by AB 1550.

**Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration**

Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration is consistent with **Goal 8, Objective C**, which seeks to implement projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts.

Dune restoration will contribute to flood protection and carbon sequestration. The project is also consistent with **Goal 6, Objective B**, which seeks to restore or enhance coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal sage scrub, coastal terraces, forests, and coastal prairie. The project will restore approximately 3 acres of coastal dune habitat. It is further consistent with **Goal 6, Objective D**, which seeks to implement projects that preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains.

#### **The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project**

The project is consistent with **Goal 8, Objective B**, which seeks to plan and design adaptation projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts. The project is further consistent with **Goal 6, Objective A**, which seeks to develop plans for the restoration and enhancement of coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal terraces, coastal sage scrub, forests, and coastal prairie.

#### **Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan**

The project is consistent with **Goal 8, Objective B**, which seeks to plan and design adaptation projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts. The project is further consistent with **Goal 2, Objective A**, which seeks to enhance opportunities for access for people with disabilities along the coast. The project is further consistent with **Goal 6, Objective A**, which seeks to develop plans for the restoration and enhancement of coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal terraces, coastal sage scrub, forests, and coastal prairie. The project is additionally consistent with **Goal 6, Objective C**, which seeks to develop plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains. The project is also consistent with **Goal 16, Objective B**, which seeks to increase the resilience to climate change impacts of communities along the coast of California or in the San Francisco Bay Area that lack capacity due to systemic inequities.

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

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on October 2, 2014, 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. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** All projects are consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan* (California Natural Resources Agency), which seeks to "actively engage, educate, learn from, and partner with communities to enable early, continuous, and meaningful participation in adaptation initiatives." (Goal 1, p.

33) and to “support planning and adaptation to reduce hazards and to increase the resilience of coastal communities, infrastructure, development, and other resources” (O-1, p. 172). *Safeguarding California* also calls for support for managed retreat strategies and projects (p.282). All of the proposed projects are also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report* (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research), which seeks to “prioritize GHG emission reduction actions that provide climate resilience benefits, especially in the natural resource sector” (p.26). All projects are consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance* (California Coastal Commission), which provides “an overview of the best available science on sea level rise for California and recommended methodology for addressing sea level rise in Coastal Commission planning and regulatory actions”. The Guidance gives priority to projects that incorporate nature-based approaches and managed retreat (p.124).

a. Bucks Landing Acquisition

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions”, as “well-maintained watersheds and floodplains can lessen flood risks resulting from variations in stream flow and timing of runoff.” (p. 23). The report further seeks to “support landscape-scale approaches to conservation and mitigation that account for multiple benefits” (p.22).
- iii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to restore coastal watersheds (p.12).

b. Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to design and implement nature-based projects to protect and enhance the adaptive capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems (O-2, p.175); increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); and promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build



resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions” (p. 23). The report further seeks to “support landscape-scale approaches to conservation and mitigation that account for multiple benefits” (p.22).

- iii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to restore coastal watersheds (p.12); and encourage flood projects that plan for climate change and achieve multiple benefits (p. 19).

c. The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142). The project plans the retreat of Carlsbad Boulevard, a strategy supported by the plan (p.282).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “support landscape-scale approaches to conservation and mitigation that account for multiple benefits” (p.22).
- iii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to restore coastal watersheds (p.12); and encourage flood projects that plan for climate change and achieve multiple benefits (p. 19).

d. Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142). The project plans the retreat of facilities at Torrey Pines, a strategy supported by the plan (p.282).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions”, as “well-maintained watersheds and floodplains can lessen flood risks resulting from variations in stream flow and timing of runoff.” (p. 23). The report further seeks to “support landscape-scale

approaches to conservation and mitigation that account for multiple benefits” (p.22).

- iii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to restore coastal watersheds (p.12); and encourage flood projects that plan for climate change and achieve multiple benefits (p. 19).
4. **Support of the public:** As indicated by the support letters provided in Exhibit 2, the suite of proposed projects are supported by elected officials, numerous community and nonprofit organizations, and local agencies.
5. **Location:** All of the projects are located either within a coastal watershed or the nine-county San Francisco Bay region.
6. **Need:** Without Conservancy funding, the proposed projects would either not proceed or would have to be scaled back.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** The projects to be funded by this authorization will improve resiliency, public access, and recreation throughout the coastal regions of the state and the San Francisco Bay Area. Over the next century the California coastal region will experience more severe impacts from the combined effects of sea level rise, higher air and water temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, salinity changes, ocean acidification, more severe El Niño climate events, increased storm frequency and intensity, higher coastal erosion rates, saltwater intrusion, and greater fire intensity and frequency. These impacts will in turn increase vulnerabilities of our coastal infrastructure, public health and safety, and our natural resources which support our economy and a vast number of other services. They will have wide-ranging implications for coastal and inland communities alike.
8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** All four Climate Ready projects address the impacts of sea-level rise directly as a project goal. All projects will complete crucial planning steps for protection against sea level rise by providing shoreline and sediment stabilization, retreat of infrastructure, or acquisition of lands to be used as a sea level rise demonstration project.
9. **Urgency:** The longer we wait to adapt to climate change, the greater the future costs and losses will be (California’s Coast and Ocean Summary Report, Fourth Climate Change Assessment, 2018). Retreat is the safest, most predictable, and most cost-effective strategy at many locations along California’s coast. Coastal marshes and other living shorelines that are restored today will be more resilient as sea level rises, thereby maintaining the flood protection and ecological benefits they provide. It is therefore urgent that we act now to protect our coastal communities and economy as well as our natural resources, public health, and agricultural resources.
10. **Resolution of more than one issue:** The projects recommended for funding are multi-benefit projects that use nature-based solutions to increase resilience to climate change impacts. They will provide both climate mitigation and adaptation while also helping to

achieve a suite of other benefits such as sea level rise resiliency, habitat enhancement, and traffic reduction.

11. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
12. **Innovation:** All four proposed projects incorporate an innovative approach to increasing resiliency to sea level rise at sites available for public interaction and education.
13. **Readiness:** All four projects described in the “Project Summary” section above are ready to implement and complete within one to five years.
14. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See the “Project History” section above.
15. **Return to Conservancy:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
16. **Cooperation:** The Climate Ready projects are intended to foster cooperation across multiple regional and political boundaries to address the impacts of climate change. To achieve this goal multiple nonprofit organizations and federal, state, and local agencies are involved in project implementation.
17. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** All of the proposed projects are focused on climate change adaptation or mitigation, and their goal is to increase resilience of the project area to projected climate change impacts. All of the proposed projects have thus taken vulnerabilities from other climate change impacts, other than sea level rise, into consideration throughout the design of the project.
18. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** All of the proposed projects will facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions. Please see the “Project Summary” section above.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE:**

**Bucks Landing Acquisition**

The project is categorically exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines at 14 Cal. Code of Reg. Sections 15313(a), 15325 and 15316, which exempt acquisitions of property for purposes of: preserving fish and wildlife habitat; preserving the natural conditions of the property, including plant and animal habitats and its open spaces; and transfer of land to establish a park. The proposed project will preserve the existing natural conditions and habitats of the property, and the management plan for the park has not been developed by Marin County Parks.

An anticipated future use of the property is as an access point to Gallinas Creek and the San Pablo Bay through the property. These activities will be evaluated for their potential environmental effect when Marin County creates a plan for the property. Those activities are not funded, approved or adopted through this authorization.

Upon approval of the project, Conservancy staff will file a Notice of Exemption.

### **Manhattan Beach Dune Restoration Project**

The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15333 as a small habitat restoration project of less than five acres that assures the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife. This project consists of the utilization of existing sediments to passively restore and transform approximately 3 acres of sandy beach habitat into a sustainable coastal strand and dune habitat complex. The project does not involve moving any sediment to or from outside of the project site, and will only involve hand labor without the use of mechanical tools. There are no rare or endangered species located at the project site; accordingly, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15333(a), there would be no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15333(b), there are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that would be disturbed or moved. Finally, this project is a stand-alone project, and consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15333(c), will not result in impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. The project would result in a beneficial impact on wildlife.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

### **The South Carlsbad Boulevard Climate Adaptation Project**

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The project involves only (1) the completion of the conceptual and technical designs, and (2) assessment of information needed for environmental review for possible future actions that the Conservancy has not approved, adopted, or funded.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

### **Torrey Pines State Beach Sea-Level-Rise Adaptation Plan**

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The project involves only (1) the completion of the conceptual and technical designs, and (2) assessment of information needed for environmental review for possible future actions that the Conservancy has not approved, adopted, or funded.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.