



Memo

Date: February 3, 2022

To: Members of the State Coastal Conservancy

From: Amy Hutzler, Executive Officer
Mary Small, Deputy Executive Officer

CC: Legislative Oversight Members

Subject: 2022 Strategic Plan Progress Report

In November 2017, the Coastal Conservancy adopted the [2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#). This is our fourth annual progress report on implementation of that Strategic Plan. This progress report highlights accomplishments under each of the goals in the Strategic Plan. A table showing progress towards achieving each numerical target is included at the end.

There are 19 goals in the Strategic Plan which are organized within six program areas. The first three programs focus on the entire California Coast (Explore the Coast, Protect and Restore the Coast, and Climate Ready); two focus on legislatively mandated geographic programs (Santa Ana River and San Francisco Bay Area); and a final Overarching area includes goals and objectives for the Conservancy as an agency, including transparency, leadership, environmental equity and justice, staff structure, and sustainable funding.

The Conservancy accomplishes its objectives by working with others to undertake projects that advance our goals. The Conservancy provides staff involvement and funding in long-term projects, conducts grant rounds, and offers leadership and technical assistance in project development. Our ability to achieve the Strategic Plan objectives is affected by several factors, including funding resources and project partners. As in past years, progress implementing the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan is uneven.

There are a few overarching issues that impacted progress achieving the objectives in the Strategic Plan. First, there is the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic. The pandemic impacted many of our partners, especially local government partners, pulling their staff away from projects like building trails. COVID also directly impacted Conservancy staff's ability to travel which directly impacted the objective to install coastal trail emblems. A second issue is an increase in directed funding to the Conservancy for specific legislative priority projects. These appropriations do not

always line up with the objectives in the adopted Strategic Plan. Finally, the Conservancy initiated a wildfire resilience program in response to the catastrophic wildfires in our jurisdiction during the past few years. This program was not anticipated in the Strategic Plan and redirected some of our staff resources.

This report highlights major progress in the past year and provides overarching explanations for the status of objectives in each of the six program areas.

Explore the Coast (Goals 1-4)

There have been major accomplishments under the Conservancy's goals related to improving the ability of all Californians to access and enjoy the coast. While we have not completely met our goal related to constructing new sections of the Coastal Trail, we made significant progress including funding construction of 4.25 miles to complete the final section between the cities of Arcata and Eureka. We have only met 25% of our objectives related to constructing regional trails, primarily because it has been difficult to find partners willing to work on these projects. Trail projects often need to be led by government entities, as opposed to non-profits, and trails are not always a high priority. Increasingly both State Parks and local park entities are requiring management endowments before they will take on a new trail.

The Conservancy has greatly exceeded our goals related to coastal recreational facilities and programs. These objectives were boosted by our beach wheelchair grant and the increased funding for Explore the Coast grants. We expect that our current Coastal Stories Grant Program will help us complete objective 4B related to the design and installation of interpretive or education displays. The Conservancy met our goals related to designing lower cost overnight accommodations projects, but we are only about halfway to our target of building new lower cost overnight accommodations. The opportunities are limited and the pace of developing lower cost overnight accommodations will be slower than we originally anticipated.

Protect and Restore the Coast (Goals 5-7)

The Conservancy has exceeded its objectives related to protecting significant coastal and watershed resource properties. Last year the Wildlands Conservancy acquired the 7,480 acre Lone Pine Ranch in the Eel River watershed. We have fallen short on the target of protecting working lands, though we are working on a few large projects this coming year to help make up that shortfall.

The Conservancy has met or exceeded its objectives related to planning and restoring coastal habitats. We have exceeded our objectives related to developing plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains, including plans to improve fish passage, but we are behind on objectives related to implementation of these projects. This reflects the fact that our local partners are able to find implementation funding from other agencies, but the Conservancy is one of the few agencies willing to fund the planning phase. These projects are getting constructed, but not with our funding.

Climate Ready (Goal 8)

The Conservancy has met most of the objectives under the Climate Ready program. We have far exceeded the objective related to implementing climate adaptation projects primarily due to the creation of the wildfire resilience program and the approval of 35 wildfire resilience projects last summer.

Santa Ana River Conservancy (Goals 9 and 10)

The Conservancy has only partially achieved many of the objectives in the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program. These projects are probably the set most impacted by COVID and the disruptions it had on local government. Several projects were paused, but now they are moving ahead. We have met our objectives related to designing public access facilities and habitat enhancement along the river. However, during this five year period, we expect to fall short on the objective of constructing new segments of the Santa Ana River Trail. The FY 2021-22 Budget Act included \$14 million specifically for the Santa Ana River Conservancy program.

San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy (Goals 11-14)

Several of the objectives under the goals of this San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program are below 50%. In 2019, the bulk of the San Francisco Bay Area Prop 68 funds were appropriated for a single legislative priority, leaving very limited funding to support acquisition projects. The goals related to habitat enhancement have been met, largely leveraging the funding from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority. We have also met or exceeded objective related to trail planning for both the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail and Water Trail. However, as in other regions, we have fallen short on trail construction objectives.

Overarching Goals (Goals 15-19)

The Conservancy has made significant progress on all the objective under our overarching goals. We adopted Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines and have made many changes to implement those guidelines, including updating project selection criteria and coastal access guidelines. We have exceeded the three measurable objectives under goal 16, including providing 42% of our funds to projects that benefit disadvantaged communities and greatly exceeding the objectives for projects that increase climate resilience in communities that lack capacity due to systemic inequities and that increase coastal access for all Californians.

The Conservancy has made far more changes to its operations than we could have ever anticipated when we drafted the Strategic Plan in 2017, including pivoting to remote operations. We have completed a work force plan and hired many great new staff. However, staff turnover has been a challenge and we have several vacancies to fill. Recruitment, hiring, and training efforts are ongoing.

The FY 2021-22 budget and the Governor's 2022-23 proposed budget provide the Conservancy with unprecedented one-time funding to advance many of its objectives. As we plan for the next five years, the Conservancy is positioned to have significant resources and an incredible opportunity to achieve great thing.

*After posting to the Conservancy website, this memo was updated on February 1, 2022 to include a table

| Objective | Target | Unit Of Measurement | Percent Complete | North Coast % Complete | Central Coast % Complete | South Coast % Complete | Bay Area % Complete | Statewide % Complete |
|---|--------|---------------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 01A. Promote California Coastal Trail | 16 | Projects | 50% | 1 | 3 | 3 | | 1 |
| 01B. Map the Coastal Trail network | 1 | Project | 100% | | | | | 1 |
| 01C. Design new CCT trail segments | 18 | Miles | 78% | 10 | 4 | 1 | | |
| 01D. Construct new CCT trail segments | 20 | Miles | 75% | 11 | 2 | 3 | | |
| 01E. Secure property for development of CCT | 7 | Projects | 57% | 2 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 01F. Sign the Coastal Trail | 100 | Percent Signed | 57% | | | | | |
| 02A. Expand barrier free access to coast | 16 | Projects | 506% | 12 | 19 | 19 | 11 | 20 |
| 02B. Open new coastal areas to the public | 14 | Projects | 79% | 6 | 1 | 4 | | |
| 02C. Design coastal recreational facilities | 13 | Designs | 223% | 4 | 10 | 15 | | |
| 02D. Construct or reconstruct coastal recreational facilities | 13 | Facilities | 146% | 6 | 8 | 5 | | |
| 02E. Design regional and river parkway trails that connect to coast | 8 | Plans | 88% | 1 | 4 | 2 | | |
| 02F. Construct regional and river parkway trails that | 10 | Miles | 25% | 1 | | 1 | | |
| 02G. Acquire land for new coastal accessways | 5 | Projects | 100% | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| 03A. Develop waterfront revitalization plans | 7 | Plans | 57% | 1 | 1 | 2 | | |
| 03B. Implement waterfront revitalization projects | 5 | Projects | 120% | | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 03C. Complete Lower-Cost Accommodations Plan | 1 | Plans | 100% | | | | | 1 |
| 03D. Design Lower Cost Accommodations | 160 | Rooms/Campsites | 104% | 18 | 72 | 77 | | |
| 03E. Create Lower Cost Accommodations | 195 | Rooms/Campsites | 53% | 8 | | 96 | | |
| 03F. Develop programs to implement LCOA Plan | 3 | Programs | 0% | | | | | |
| 04A. Support programs and events that improve public understanding of coastal resources | 105 | Program | 179% | 19 | 24 | 71 | 30 | 44 |
| 04B. Support the design and installation of interpretive or educational displays | 30 | Exhibits | 77% | 2 | 6 | 15 | | |
| 04C. Construct or improve regional environmental education centers | 3 | Centers | 33% | | 1 | | | |
| 05A. Protect significant coastal and watershed resource | 11,000 | Acres | 191% | 8542 | 10233 | 1728 | 515 | |
| 05B. Protect working-lands | 14,500 | Acres | 24% | | 3490 | | | |
| 05C. Implement projects that preserve and restore fish and wildlife corridors | 16 | Projects | 113% | 5 | 7 | 5 | 1 | |

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| 06A. Develop restoration and enhancement plans for | 35 | Plans | 211% | 12 | 37 | 16 | | 9 |
| 06B. Restore or enhance coastal habitats | 4,180 | Acres | 99% | 3091 | 832 | 205 | | |
| 06C. Develop plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains | 30 | Plans | 177% | 18 | 23 | 11 | 1 | |
| 06D. Implement projects that preserve and enhance | 40 | Projects | 95% | 13 | 4 | 21 | | |
| 06E. Implement projects to improve fish habitat | 45 | Projects | 56% | 15 | 7 | 3 | | |
| 06F. Complete plans to improve coastal water quality | 17 | Plans | 153% | 5 | 15 | 6 | | |
| 06G. Implement projects to improve coastal water quality | 28 | Projects | 61% | 6 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 06H. Implement projects to support the recovery of the southern sea otter | 10 | Projects | 70% | | 7 | | | |
| 07A. Develop plans to enhance working lands | 30 | Plans | 103% | 10 | 12 | | | 9 |
| 07B. Implement projects to enhance working lands | 17 | Projects | 182% | 23 | 1 | 0 | | 7 |
| 08A. Conduct climate change vulnerability assessments and develop adaptation plans | 12 | Study | 58% | 1 | | 4 | 2 | |
| 08B. Plan climate change adaptation projects | 21 | Plans | 171% | 5 | 2 | 8 | 15 | 6 |
| 08C. Implement climate change adaptation projects. | 28 | Projects | 350% | 41 | 13 | 20 | 17 | 7 |
| 09A. SAR: Design sections of the Santa Ana River Trail | 10 | Miles | 34% | | | 3 | | |
| 09B. SAR: Construct sections of the Santa Ana River Trail | 12 | Miles | 20% | | | 2 | | |
| 09C. SAR: Design public access facilities along Santa Ana River Trail | 6 | Projects | 133% | | | 8 | | |
| 09D. SAR: Construct public access facilities along Santa Ana River Trail | 6 | Projects | 50% | | | 3 | | |
| 09E. SAR: Implement environmental education projects along SART | 6 | Projects | 33% | | | 2 | | |
| 10A. SAR: Protect natural habitats and other open space resources | 5 | Acres | 80% | | | 4 | | |
| 10B. SAR: Develop plans for enhancement plans for natural habitats and other open space resources | 6 | Plans | 100% | | | 6 | | |
| 10C. SAR: Enhance natural habitats and other open space resources. | 4 | Acres | 50% | | | 2 | | |
| 11A. SFBay: Identify and prioritize resource and recreational goals | 2 | Plans | 100% | | | | 2 | |

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| 12A. SF Bay: Protect wetlands, riparian habitat, and subtidal habitat | 1,600 | Acres | 0% | | | | | |
| 12B. SF Bay: Protect wildlife habitat, connecting corridors, scenic areas, and other open-space resources | 6,500 | Acres | 5% | | | | 321 | |
| 12C. SF Bay: Develop plans for enhancement of wetland, subtidal, and upland habitat | 5 | Plans | 300% | | | | 15 | |
| 12D. SF Bay: Enhance wetland, subtidal, and upland habitat | 4,000 | Acres | 96% | | | | 3846 | |
| 12E. SF Bay: Develop plans for enhancement of rivers, creeks and watersheds | 4 | Plans | 100% | | | | 4 | |
| 12F. SF Bay: Enhance riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes | 10 | Projects | 140% | | | | 14 | |
| 12G. SF Bay: Eradicate non-native invasive species that threaten important habitats | 1 | Projects | 100% | | | | 1 | |
| 13A. SF Bay: Develop plans for projects that provide recreational facilities | 3 | Plans | 100% | | 1 | | 2 | |
| 13B. SF Bay: Implement projects that provide recreational facilities | 6 | Projects | 117% | 1 | | | 6 | |
| 13C. SF Bay: Acquire land for public access or to provide trail corridors | 1,700 | Acres | 49% | | | | 836 | |
| 13D. SF Bay: Develop plans for completing segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail | 10 | Miles | 108% | | | | 11 | |
| 13E. SF Bay: Construct segments of the San Francisco Bay | 15 | Miles | 3% | | | | 1 | |
| 13F. SF Bay: Plan segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail | 25 | Miles | 162% | | | | 40 | |
| 13G. SF Bay: Construct segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail | 9 | Miles | 115% | | | | 10 | |
| 13H. SF Bay: Develop plans for regionally significant public access trails and community connectors | 2 | Plans | 250% | | 1 | | 4 | |
| 13I. SF Bay: Construct regionally significant public trails and community connectors | 2 | Projects | 250% | | | | 5 | |
| 13J. SF Bay: Designate launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail | 25 | Sites | 40% | | | | 10 | |
| 13K. SF Bay: Enhance designated launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail | 10 | Sites | 50% | | | | 5 | |
| 13L. SF Bay: Implement projects that expand access for | 9 | Projects | 278% | 1 | | | 15 | 9 |
| 14A. SF Bay: Protect working lands | 1,000 | Acres | 24% | | | | 235 | |

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| 14B. SF Bay: Implement projects that enhance working lands | 4 | Projects | 800% | 20 | | | 12 | |
| 15A. Communicate a vision for coastal conservation in | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 15B. Participate in regional and statewide collaboratives | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 15C. Support partner organizations through technical assistance and information exchange | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 16A. Prioritize projects that benefit disadvantaged communities | 35 | Percent of Funds | 120% | | | | | 42 |
| 16B. Increase climate change resilience in communities | 15 | Projects | 167% | 1 | 3 | 11 | 10 | |
| 16C. Increase coastal access for all Californians | 50 | Projects | 326% | 18 | 22 | 46 | 32 | 45 |
| 17A. Conduct annual evaluations of the Conservancy's budget | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 17B. Evaluate progress towards achieving annual funding targets | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 18A. Align staff resources with the long-term funding strategy | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 18B. Maintain project database and complete required reporting to oversight bodies | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 19A. Improve web presence to improve transparency and external communications | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 19B. Use our mapping tools to facilitate our work and communications | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |
| 19C. Disseminate summary reports of our accomplishments | 0 | N/A | | | | | | |