

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
September 22, 2022

COASTAL STORIES GRANT PROGRAM

Project No. 22-028-01
Project Managers: Fanny Yang, Emely Lopez,
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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$1,098,500 to three nonprofit organizations, one tribe, and two public entities for six Coastal Stories projects to create storytelling installations or interpretive materials that represent diverse communities and perspectives that historically have been excluded from narratives of California’s coast and publicly accessible lands.

LOCATION: Statewide (see Exhibit 1)

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Coastal Stories Grant Round 1 Announcement](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

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

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed one million, ninety-eight thousand, five hundred U.S. dollars (\$1,098,500) to three nonprofit organizations, one tribe, and two public entities for six storytelling projects that will enhance coastal public access by making the outdoors more inclusive and welcoming. The six grantees are as follows (presented in alphabetical order):

- Canal Arts (Fiscal Sponsor City of San Rafael): Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to collect tribal and immigrant stories and develop and install signage along a two-mile stretch of Bay Trail to share a chronological story about the past, present, and future communities and coastal landscape of San Rafael’s Canal area.

- City of Crescent City: Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to tell ten unique Tolowa Stories with videos linked to QR codes displayed on kiosks throughout Beachfront Park in Crescent City, CA.
- Color the Water: One hundred fifty thousand five hundred dollars (\$150,500) to plan and develop up to three interactive and immersive surf art murals that will serve as public landmarks on the Venice coast, in the community of Watts, and potentially at Dockweiler State Beach in Los Angeles, CA.
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice: One hundred forty-eight thousand dollars (\$148,000) to plan and co-create two large murals that will document the historical use and relevance of Sleepy Lagoon for the Latinx community in Maywood, CA.
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center: Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to plan and develop stories past and present of the diverse people of Guadalupe and their relationship to the natural wonders of the nearby Guadalupe Dunes Complex.
- Wiyot Tribe: One hundred ninety-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$197,500) to develop tribal interpretive content about Wiyot land stewardship in Humboldt Bay, and to install interpretive signage at three coastal tribal village sites (Tuluwat, Digawuttklh, Mouralherwaqh), at the Wiyot Cultural Center, and at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center.

Prior to commencement of the project, each 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.
4. Any other applicable agreements determined necessary for the project by the Conservancy's Executive Officer.

Findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 9 of Division 21 (Sections 31400 *et seq.*) of the Public Resources Code, regarding the implementation of a system of public accessways to and along the California coast (Chapter 9).
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. The proposed nonprofit organizations are organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize disbursement of up to \$1,098,500 to three nonprofit organizations, one tribe, and two public entities for a total of six projects that will create storytelling installations or interpretive materials that represent California's diverse communities and perspectives along California's coast and publicly accessible lands. These projects will enhance public access to lands within the Conservancy's jurisdiction by sharing culturally diverse stories through installations such as murals, signage, monuments, or guides. The stories told through these projects will be led by communities that have been excluded from narratives of California's coast and publicly accessible lands. The California Coast's stories are presently dominated by European-settler perspectives.

As an extension of the Conservancy's Explore the Coast (ETC) program, the Coastal Stories grant program was developed in 2021 to fund projects that increase the representation of historically excluded groups in coastal storytelling. The program will make the outdoors more welcoming to people and communities that face barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast.

The priorities of the Coastal Stories grant program are to:

- Promote a sense of belonging in outdoor spaces by presenting perspectives that include Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and/or other historically excluded communities.
- Engage representatives of BIPOC and/or other historically excluded communities to develop and share their coastal perspectives and stories.
- Improve educational content in California's outdoor spaces by correcting one-sided histories, retelling stories in more appropriate and inclusive ways, and developing new content that shares untold stories.
- Ensure the use of creative forms of interpretation and storytelling.

The projects proposed for funding will use a variety of storytelling products including multilingual signage, solar and hand-crank powered interpretive exhibits, audio and video content linked to QR codes, digital archives, murals, guides, and public art. Some projects will hire artists or community members to design and implement murals or other art installations. Other projects are engaging community members to research and develop storytelling content and products. The proposed projects will add storytelling and interpretive elements to existing waterfronts, public accessways, trails, interpretive centers, and other public spaces.

To leverage the collective power of the diverse stories that will be developed and shared with Coastal Stories funding, Conservancy staff will work with grantees and partners to amplify and memorialize the stories developed through these projects. Though project maintenance terms will vary from 3-20 years, staff will seek partnerships with external organizations or museums to immortalize the stories produced and store them into the future as part of the story of California. Staff also aims to amplify the stories produced through documentation of the grant and project process, and the development and sharing of a Coastal Story repository. Staff will return to the Conservancy board to provide updates on this outreach work in the future.

The Request for Proposals for the 2021-2022 Coastal Stories grant round was released on October 25, 2021. The Conservancy received 80 pre-proposals requesting approximately \$13 million in Conservancy funding. From the pre-proposals submitted, Conservancy staff invited ten full proposals from projects that best met both the grant program's priorities and eligibility. Six projects were selected for funding recommendation out of the ten full proposals that were submitted. These six projects will develop and share powerful stories, demonstrate effective partnerships between communities and landowners, use creative forms of storytelling, and have a plan for ongoing maintenance.

Staff recommends funding the following six projects for the 2021-2022 Coastal Stories grant round. The projects are arranged alphabetically by grantee. Each individual project summary includes the grantee; project name; recommended funding amount; geographic region of the participants; and a brief project description.

CANAL ARTS, FISCAL SPONSOR CITY OF SAN RAFAEL

\$200,000

The People of the Canal

San Francisco Bay Area

Canal Arts will administer the project, with the City of San Rafael as the fiscal sponsor. Canal Arts will collect tribal and immigrant stories and develop and install signage along a two-mile stretch of Bay Trail to share a chronological story about the past, present, and future communities and coastal landscape of San Rafael's Canal area. Through a collaboration of multiple community groups, the stories will include that of the Miwok Tribe, represented by the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, and that of the Latinx, Asian, and European communities who have immigrated to the area thereafter. The stories will provide a more complete history and also share about current residents' relationship to the land and waters of the San Francisco Bay. These stories will be presented through signage and solar-powered interpretive exhibits placed in chronological order to share a timeline of the region along a two-mile shoreline path. On the signage, Canal Arts will work with community representatives, artists, and poets to include graphic designs and other forms of artistic expression and informational content. Stories will be written in English and Spanish, and potentially other languages, will be accessible for youth and adults, and the signage will include QR codes for audio, visual, and augmented reality (AR) experiences.

Project partners include Canal Arts, City of San Rafael (grantee), Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Canal Alliance, Voces del Canal, Marin Asian Advocacy Project and California Institute for Community, Art, and Nature.

Site Description: The project site will be a two-mile section of San Francisco Bay Trail located south of San Rafael Canal. The trail connects two parks: the John and Jean Starkweather Shoreline Park to the south and Pickleweed Park to the north. The story-telling signage will be installed along the paved path. The path is frequented by members of the nearby Asian and Latinx immigrant communities. The City of San Rafael is the predominant landowner, though the site also includes a privately held 85-acre wetland. The private property owner, Francisco Properties, provided approval and a letter of support for the project.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The project team consists of Canal Arts, the City of San Rafael, and Storek Studio and Architecture. The City of San Rafael is the primary landowner and the fiscal sponsor for the project. The City has committed to assist with project implementation and maintenance in the long-term. The project will be implemented by Canal Arts and their contractor, Rich Storek Studio and Architecture. Canal Arts is a non-profit coalition of 14 civic, community service, business, educational, and arts organizations in Marin County. The coalition has over five years of experience implementing public arts projects. Rich Storek Studio and Architecture also has five years of experience managing complex projects and engaging with the communities of the San Rafael Canal area.

CITY OF CRESCENT CITY

\$200,000

Tolowa Coastal Stories

North Coast

The Tolowa Coastal Stories project will tell ten unique Tolowa stories by using QR codes linked to video content at kiosks located along the California Coastal Trail and throughout Beachfront Park (Park) in Crescent City. Several of the kiosks will include binocular viewers to get a closer look at some of the locations being described in the stories. The Coastal Stories grant will cover the cost of video production, web development, binocular viewers, ADA-accessible hand-cranked outdoor audio platform, and tribal storytellers to tell the ten carefully curated Tolowa stories. This self-guided storytelling journey will start at the Tolowa Cultural Interpretive Area, adjacent to the City's Visitor's Center, and end at the nationally registered historic Brother Jonathan Park, just over one mile away. Each story would consist of a 5–7 minute video clip linked to a scannable QR code or a hand-cranked outdoor audio platform. The goal of telling these stories in this space is not only to correct one-sided histories by guiding residents and visitors to a deeper understanding and acknowledgement of Taa-'at-dvn (Crescent City) and its original people, but also to promote a sense of belonging for the Tolowa people on their ancestral land. Stories and traditional knowledge have been passed on from generation to generation through storytelling and this project will commemorate this tradition and support the Tolowa in keeping their oral tradition alive for future generations.

Project partners include the following: City of Crescent City (grantee), Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (federal recognized Tolowa tribe), Elk Valley Rancheria (federally recognized Tolowa tribe), Tolowa Nation (unrecognized Tolowa tribe), Del Norte County Historical Society, and Crescent City-Del Norte Chamber of Commerce/Visitor's Center.

Site Description: The Park, owned and managed by the City of Crescent City, is located on the ancestral lands of the Tolowa people and in Del Norte County. The waterfront park is approximately 35 acres and is located between the Crescent City Harbor and downtown Crescent City. The Park is Crescent City's most prominent park with a public pool, cultural center, large kids' play area, and picnic area with fire pits at the southern end of the beach. It fronts onto the outer section of Crescent City Harbor, directly between the City owned RV Park on the east end and Battery Point Lighthouse to the west.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The City was incorporated in 1854 and has a strong track record of managing both State and Federal grants, totaling over \$36 million in the past 5 years. The City has budgeted for the maintenance of created park features, binocular viewers, and the hand-cranked audio platform.

COLOR THE WATER

\$150,500

Coastlines of Color: Spaces and Stories of Safety and Belonging

South Coast

The project will develop two or potentially three interactive and immersive surf art murals that will serve as public landmarks on the Venice coast, in the community of Watts, and potentially at Dockweiler State Beach in Los Angeles, CA. The potential third mural has not been approved by the land manager. If the land manager approves the mural, the grantee will add this third mural. The murals will tell a story that shares the deep cultural connection to the ocean and the history of BIPOC surfers through a community collaboration that will include opportunities for digital interaction via QR code and AR components. The murals will provide access to the growing archive of surf stories that will fill in spaces from the past and continue the BIPOC beach legacy into the future. The stories will shed light on ancient BIPOC origins of surfing in Polynesia, Peru, and West Africa and bring the stories to the present BIPOC communities and individuals who surf today on the Los Angeles coast. The stories will reconnect and create a sense of belonging for BIPOC members in surfing communities and along the coast. Storylines and narratives will connect BIPOC communities in Los Angeles with the joy and healing of the ocean and ocean recreation and will also connect viewers with opportunities for free surf lessons and coastal recreation through Color the Water's other programs. This story is important because many BIPOC communities now carry the belief that the ocean and ocean play are not meant for them since their stories have been excluded from the larger California outdoor narrative. These stories are a substantial step in dismantling the idea that surfing is not for BIPOC community members.

The stories and murals will be co-created with communities in Venice, Watts, and potentially Inglewood. The project will gather stories, design and co-create murals, and empower and impact BIPOC communities near the coast in Los Angeles. Project partners include the following: Color the Water (grantee), Department of Beloved Places, Venice Beach Community Housing, BLEX: Black Excellence, and The Watts Labor Community Action Committee.

Site Description:

The project has secured two mural location sites in Venice and Watts. There will be a mural at the Venice Community Housing building, located a block away from the beach. The second mural will be at Watts Labor Community Action Committee, located approximately 12 miles from Dockweiler Beach. Both organizations are long-standing, community-based, and community-serving. Venice Beach Community Housing offers affordable housing to low-income residents, and Watts Labor Community Action Committee provides responsive social programs that serve BIPOC communities. The organizations have committed to collaborating and maintaining the public art murals. The sites for this project are walls on community-serving buildings that face public right-of-ways. The third mural site, Dockweiler State Beach, is still under development. If the landowner approves of the mural, the grantee will proceed with placing a mural at this beach given it is highly utilized by Black and people of color.

Grant Applicant Qualifications:

Color the Water is a non-profit organization established in June of 2020, amidst the rise of the pandemic and crescendo of global outcry over racial injustice after the murder of George Floyd. The organization's mission is to negate systemic racism through the joyful healing practice of surfing by offering free surf lessons to all BIPOC alongside storytelling and media representation. The organization's leadership reflects the community served. Color the Water has managed and implemented grants for the past two years, and has received grants, donations, and support from the Goldhirsh Foundation, Weingart Foundation, Title 9, Athleta, the Dwight Stuart Youth Fund, Sony, Disney, LAFC, Vans, Patagonia, Surfrider, and others.

EAST YARD COMMUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

\$148,000

Agua Por Vida

South Coast

Through Agua Por Vida, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ) will plan and co-create two large-scale murals that will document the use and historical relevance of the Sleepy Lagoon for the Mexican American community along the Los Angeles River. The title "Agua Por Vida" (Water For Life) underscores the theme of water and coastal access, and its importance to historically excluded communities of East and Southeast Los Angeles. Sleepy Lagoon served as a de facto beach for the Mexican American communities because of heavy segregation on the California coast. This river spot was located 15 miles inland from the coast and was an extremely popular location.

The Agua Por Vida- Sleepy Lagoon murals will share the history of Sleepy Lagoon, as well as its connection to the coast during the segregation era. The murals will shed light on the fact that this space was once lively and will honor the folks that suffered the consequences of oppression at Sleepy Lagoon. In 1942, the police responded aggressively to an unsolved murder in the area, incarcerating thousands of innocent Latinx youth. The series of events led to the historical Zoot Suit Riot. A coalition was formed to defend the youth from negative criminal stereotypes society placed on the Mexican American community. Mexican Americans were tired of being viewed as criminals and foreigners in a city that was established by their ancestors.

The two new murals will have QR codes connecting participants to the Sleepy Lagoon website. East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice will lead community outreach meetings at Maywood Park. Their outreach will follow a grassroots model, which includes canvassing and recruitment of community youth for participation. The mural artist will also be from the community, and the artist will help organize painting events for the local community to create community ownership and interactive educational opportunities. The artist and those that participate will receive a fair stipend to inspire future outdoor artists and advocates. After the completion of both murals, there will be a community celebration and unveiling that will include a Tongva blessing ceremony and will welcome artists, community members, and local officials.

Project partners include the following: EYCEJ (grantee), East LA Community Arts and Mural Program, SELA Art Collaborative, South Central Arts, and City of Maywood.

Site Description:

The Agua Por Vida murals will be located in Maywood because of their proximity to the historical Sleepy Lagoon site. Unfortunately, the Sleepy Lagoon has been paved over to build the Bell Annex industrial district and the 710 freeway. The two murals will be close to the original Sleepy Lagoon site. One mural will be at Riverfront Park, on the exterior walls of a large handball court. The second mural will be at the Maywood Park sports complex, on the side of the community center. Both locations are large blank walls facing heavily trafficked areas, allowing for maximum public engagement opportunity. The City of Maywood owns the buildings and is a willing partner interested in supporting the project.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: EYCEJ was established in 2001 by residents of the Commerce/East Los Angeles area who were concerned with the increasing environmental health impacts of industrial pollution in their community, as well as several pending industrial expansion projects adjacent to homes, schools, and parks. Since its inception, EYCEJ has achieved many important successes, including bringing issues of environmental justice and air quality to the forefront for other communities and environmental governmental entities at both the regional and statewide levels. EYCEJ is primarily funded through grants and is therefore familiar with grant applications and reporting. More recently, EYCEJ administered a block grant program under Los Angeles County that aimed to provide COVID relief funds for community partners; this program included quarterly reports. Additionally, EYCEJ holds funds for coalitions and community groups.

GUADALUPE-NIPOMO DUNES CENTER

\$200,000

Coastal Stories: Guadalupe Dunes

Central Coast

The Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (Dunes Center) will plan and develop local stories, past and present, of the diverse people of Guadalupe and their relationship to the natural wonders of the nearby Guadalupe Dunes Complex, a National Natural Landmark and the largest coastal dunes ecosystem on earth. The stories will be told through at least six signs and one mural. The project aims to strengthen the community’s connection and access to the Dunes and build a sense of community pride by visually showcasing the rich history of the people of Guadalupe. To accomplish these goals, youth will conduct interviews of community elders from different cultural backgrounds (including Chumash, Japanese, and Latinx elders) and design and create a multi-lingual website to showcase the stories, and large visible multilingual signs, as well as a mural illustrating the community’s history while highlighting the Dunes.

The Dunes Center will lead the project working in tandem with the City of Guadalupe, which owns the land where the signs and mural will be installed. Other organizations will assist with various project elements including coordinating interviews, community outreach, website content development, and sign and mural content development, design, placement, and maintenance.

Project partners include the following: Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (grantee), City of Guadalupe, Guadalupe Union School District, Family Service Agency, Guadalupe Community Changers, Guadalupe Business Association, Guadalupe Lions Club & Leo Club.

Site Description:

The proposed signs will be located along Main Street (Highway 166) and Guadalupe Street (Highway 1) as well as in Guadalupe’s city Parks. The signage sites are owned by the City of Guadalupe, an active project partner. The mural will be painted on a cement wall at the popular Jack O’Connell City Park located on the access route to the Rancho Guadalupe Dunes County Park.

Grant Applicant Qualifications:

The Dunes Center was established in 1999. In the past twenty-three years, the organization has successfully managed dozens of large state, federal, and private foundation grants which have helped provide education, access, and research about the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex to the local community and visitors. The Dunes Center has an outstanding reputation in Guadalupe and strong ties to the community. The Dunes Center has adequate financial resources to operate with a reimbursable grant. The Dunes Center will maintain the digital resources in-house and will maintain the mural annually and signage quarterly for the next 10 years. A local artist will be on call to help with any mural upkeep.

WIYOT TRIBE

\$200,000

Reclaiming Wigi: Tribe’s Coastal Stories Project

North Coast

Reclaiming Wigi: Tribe’s Coastal Stories Project tells the importance of three Wiyot Tribe villages: Tuluwat, Digawuttklh, and Mouralherwaqh around Humboldt Bay. The Wiyot Tribe will place interpretive signage in Solatluk (Wiyot language) at the three village sites. The villages are the Dou gou rou louwi’ Cultural Center (Wiyot Cultural Center), the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center, and along the Humboldt Bay. The signage will describe the Wiyot People’s history, the culturally important species, and the ethnobiology of these sites. In addition, the Wiyot Tribe will tell their present and traditional stories relating to ecological knowledge, stewardship, and eco-cultural renewal. Signage will use QR readers to convey the stories via mobile devices.

At the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center, the Wiyot Tribe and the Friends of the Dunes will collaborate to plan, design, and install a permanent interpretive display panel for the interior of the Nature Center that tells the story of the Wiyot land stewardship. The storytelling project will build on the existing concrete trail markers that depict different native dune animals by creating cell phone-enabled recordings of the names of each of the animals in Solatluk.

Project partners include the Wiyot Tribe (grantee) and Friends of the Dunes.

Site Description: The project includes signage installations at three tribal village locations (Tuluwat, Digawuttklh, and Mouralherwaqh) that are at or along Humboldt Bay, at the Wiyot Cultural Center, and at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center. All project locations are in Humboldt County.

Tuluwat (formerly known as Indian Island and Gunther Island) is the largest of three islands located between the Samoa and Eureka Channels within Humboldt Bay, consisting mainly of tidal marsh. Mouralherwaqh, known as "Wolf House", is a village located on the east side of Humboldt Bay across from its mouth, near the present-day communities of King Salmon and

Humboldt Hill. The wetlands sitting near Mouralherwaqh are home to many types of waterfowl that the Wiyot people historically hunted to feed their families and took to ceremonies to help provide for the people. The Wiyot Tribe currently owns Tuluwat and Mouralherwaqh, and is in the process of receiving Digawutuklh through a property transfer.

Friends of the Dunes is planning to transfer ownership of the eastern part of the Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area to the Wiyot Tribe in a historic land return. This sets the stage for the Digawutuklh portion of the Reclaiming Wigi coastal stories project. The Samoa Dunes and Wetlands Conservation Area is the newest conserved coastal land in Humboldt Bay. On October 15, 2020, the property was purchased for habitat conservation and public access purposes using funds granted by State Coastal Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and the California Natural Resources Agency. The Friends of the Dunes is the interim conservation landowner. Through agreement with the Wiyot Tribe, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Friends of the Dunes, and the funding partners, the western parcels of the Samoa Dunes and Wetlands will go to BLM for conservation ownership, and the eastern parcels to the Wiyot Tribe, as these lands are very significant to Wiyot People.

The Wiyot Tribe owns and manages the Wiyot Cultural Center, located in the city of Eureka. The Wiyot Cultural Center is a space to build community, learn from each other, speak Soulatluk, and practice cultural practices while learning from their shared history.

Friends of the Dunes owns and manages the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center, which serves as the gateway to more than 1,700 acres of contiguous, conserved coastal dunes on the north spit of Humboldt Bay, welcoming and orienting more than 6,000 visitors each year to what is now the best-preserved, most intact native coastal dune system on the U.S. west coast. The Humboldt Coastal Nature Center is a modified earth-shelter home. The Conservancy supported the purchase and conversion of the nature center, which opened to the public in 2011. More than 1,000 K-12 students visit the center and the property's nature trails on educational field trips each year. The Humboldt Coastal Nature Center currently provides interactive natural history exhibits and displays focusing on coastal ecology. Entry to the building and the surrounding property is free and open to the public year-round.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: The Wiyot Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribal Government. The Wiyot Tribe owns Tuluwat, Mouralherwaqh, and the Wiyot Cultural Center. Several of the tribe's departments are committed to involvement in this project, including the Cultural Department, Soulatluk (Wiyot Language) Program, Natural Resources Department, and Cultural Center. The grantee has a system and staff in place to ensure proper oversight of grant awards, and is experienced in securing, monitoring, and administering public agency grants and contracts. The tribe is experienced with land restoration, as they have worked for over 30 years to return land to the tribe and to restore that land. They are the best tellers of their own story and are well-equipped to capture and share the stories of their tribe and their tribal language.

The Wiyot Tribe will maintain the interpretive signage at the three village sites and at the Cultural Center. In addition, the Tribe will maintain the trail systems and access used for guided interpretive walks. Friends of the Dunes has committed to maintaining the portions of the project located at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center. Siting the interpretive signage indoors,

in a building that is open to the public and free, will ensure a long life for this storytelling project. The outdoor portion of the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center project relies on existing concrete markers, which experience has demonstrated are extremely durable, even in a coastal environment.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria, last updated on September 23, 2021, in the following respects:

Selection Criteria

1. Extent to which the project helps the Conservancy accomplish the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Strategic Plan" section below.

2. Project is a good investment of state resources.

This grant provides important benefits to the diverse population of Californians. By documenting and sharing these histories and stories of underrepresented communities, the projects aim to make outdoor spaces and interpretive centers feel welcoming and inclusive for all Californians. As an extension of the Conservancy's Explore the Coast (ETC) program, this effort is intended to make the outdoors more welcoming to people and communities that face barriers to accessing or enjoying the coast. These projects help the Conservancy achieve public access goals, as well as aims of its Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines.

There is a movement across State agencies to fund community-based organizations and support the efforts that communities decide are important to them. The wide interest in Coastal Stories funding shows that communities are eager to share their stories. By supporting these projects, the Conservancy can build community capacity and support important partnerships.

This grant program also supports the 2021 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that will encourage and empower the diverse communities of California to recreate in outdoor spaces. The diverse stories will add more perspective to what outdoor recreation looks like to different communities, and Californians will in hopes see themselves reflected in the stories.

3. Project includes a serious effort to engage tribes. Examples of tribal engagement include good faith, documented efforts to work with tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area.

One proposed grantee, Wiyot Tribe, is a tribal entity, and funding them means contributing State dollars to self-determined storytelling and cultural sharing from tribes. City of Crescent City's project is all about sharing stories of the Tolowa People and though the City is the grantee, three Tolowa tribal groups are project partners. Additionally, Canal Arts will work closely with tribal communities to share their stories and traditions as part of their project.

These projects will shed light on cultural relationships tribes have to the lands across California. They will incorporate indigenous voices, leadership, and perspectives.

Additionally, prior to staff recommendation, tribal consultation letters were sent out to tribes local to each project, giving them time to communicate, consult, or engage around Coastal Stories projects, as early as possible in project development.

4. Project benefits will be sustainable or resilient over the project lifespan.

All the projects will continue to deliver benefits over a reasonable time period. The projects all have plans and parties responsible for maintenance, and signage will be displayed for at least ten years. Grantees will be encouraged to double print the signage and flip the sign once one side is worn. Project partners will also consider weathering of signs and graffiti removal protocols for any public displayed material.

Most of the projects will be creating digital files (audio, video, and text) and repositories to more permanently document the stories they are collecting. By creating a story repository with museum or nonprofit partners, this program will ensure that the stories of California that emerge through Coastal Stories projects will be stored and shared beyond each project's installations.

Many of the projects are incorporating QR codes which will link the on-the-ground installations to web-based information. This technology allows the grantees to update and maintain the web-based information without having to recreate the signage or public art.

5. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.

The primary purpose of Coastal Stories projects is to create a more inclusive and welcoming outdoor environment for communities that have been historically excluded in California. In addition to enhancing public access to parks and open spaces, these projects deliver multiple benefits. By installing murals, modern and inclusive signage, and other types of interpretive exhibits, these projects also enhance recreational amenities and beautify spaces for all Californians. By increasing representation of the stories of historically excluded communities, they increase equity and environmental justice. In the same vein, at least a portion of all of these grants will go towards directly funding underserved community members, as either leaders or partners on these projects. In this way, the projects provide job and volunteer opportunities that allow community members to be involved in sharing their stories. Finally, these projects are all strengthening partnerships between landowning agencies and community-based organizations, individuals, and tribes – partnerships that may manifest in agencies better serving communities, and other types of meaningful projects into the future.

6. Project planned with meaningful community engagement and broad community support.

Four of the grantees leading the proposed projects are made up of and represent historically excluded communities – Color the Water, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, and the Wiyot Tribe. By leading these projects, historically excluded communities are at the front and center of these projects. Other projects, including those by Canal Arts, City of Crescent City, and Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, have community-based co-creators and

partners. All of these projects are deeply community-focused and already demonstrate community engagement and support. It is the communities that are pushing these projects forward. Collectively, these six projects engage 32 existing partner organizations, with some intending to reach more individuals as part of their projects.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Coastal Conservancy	\$1,098,500
Others	\$2,797,952
Project Total	\$3,896,452

The anticipated source of Conservancy funding for the six proposed projects is a fiscal year 2021-2022 appropriation to the Conservancy from the General Fund specifically for the “Explore the Coast Program”.

Unless specifically identified as “Required Match,” the other sources of funding and in-kind contributions described above are estimates. The Conservancy does not typically require matching funds or in-kind services, nor does it require documentation of expenditures from other funders or of in-kind services. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete a project. Project partners will provide approximately \$2.8 million in matching funds for the 2021-2022 Coastal Stories grants. In addition, they will provide another approximately \$94,764 worth of in-kind services from community, staff, and project partner volunteer time, art material donations, and free site and facility usage via partnerships between organizations.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

Funding the projects proposed under this authorization is consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code. Staff recommends the Conservancy find these projects to be consistent with the Chapter 9 of Division 21 (Sections 31400 et seq.) regarding the establishment of a system of public accessways to and along the California 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, including San Francisco Bay. All of the proposed projects listed below will be funded by the Conservancy to implement public access objectives and to provide enhancements to public accessways that will make them more inclusive of diverse communities. The amount of funding provided was determined by the total amount of funding available for the Coastal Stories grant program, the fiscal resources of the applicant, the urgency of the project relative to other eligible projects, and the application of factors described in the solicitation. 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.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#) GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

The six 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, along with the names of the proposed projects that meet each goal.

Consistent with **Goal 4, Objective A**, which seeks to support educational material and interpretive events that improve public understanding and promote stewardship of coastal resources:

- City of Crescent City (Tolowa Coastal Stories)
- Color the Water (Coastlines of Color: Spaces and Stories of Safety and Belonging)
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (Coastal Stories: Guadalupe Dunes)

Consistent with **Goal 4, Objective B** of the Conservancy's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, which seek support the design and installation of interpretative or education displays, and exhibits related to coastal, watershed, and ocean-resource education, maritime history, and climate-change:

- Canal Arts (The People of the Canal), fiscal sponsor City of San Rafael
- City of Crescent City (Tolowa Coastal Stories)
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (Agua Por Vida)
- Color the Water (Coastlines of Color: Spaces and Stories of Safety and Belonging)
- Wiyot Tribe (Reclaiming Wigi: Tribe's Coastal Stories Project)
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (Coastal Stories: Guadalupe Dunes)

Consistent with **Goal 16, Objective A**, which seeks to prioritize projects for funding that are located in disadvantaged communities or directly benefit disadvantaged communities, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Canal Arts (The People of the Canal), fiscal sponsor City of San Rafael
- Color the Water (Coastlines of Color: Spaces and Stories of Safety and Belonging)
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (Agua Por Vida)
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (Coastal Stories: Guadalupe Dunes)

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

Conservancy staff reviewed the six proposed projects for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations (14 California Code of Regulations, Sections 15000 *et seq.*). All of the proposed projects are categorically exempt under CEQA. Applicable CEQA exemptions are listed below.

14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15301 (Existing Facilities): All six of the proposed 2021-2022 Coastal Stories projects listed below are categorically exempt under 14

CCR Section 15301, which exempts operation, maintenance, and minor alterations of existing facilities or topographic features including pedestrian trails (Section 15301(c)) and wildlife areas and stream channels to protect fish and wildlife resources (Section 15301(i)).

- Canal Arts (The People of the Canal), fiscal sponsor City of San Rafael
- City of Crescent City (Tolowa Coastal Stories)
- Color the Water (Coastlines of Color: Spaces and Stories of Safety and Belonging)
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (Agua Por Vida)
- Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center (Coastal Stories: Guadalupe Dunes)
- Wiyot Tribe (Reclaiming Wigi: Tribe's Coastal Stories Project)

14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15311 (Accessory Structures): The three proposed projects below are, in addition, also categorically exempt under 14 CCR Section 15311, which exempts construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities including on-premises signs (Section 15311(a)).

- Canal Arts (The People of the Canal), fiscal sponsor City of San Rafael
- The Wiyot Tribe (Reclaiming Wigi: Tribe's Coastal Stories)

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