

Lenzi, Chelsea

From: Couch, Rachel@SCC <Rachel.Couch@scc.ca.gov>
Sent: Sunday, December 9, 2018 11:42 PM
To: sbcob; Wolf, Janet; Hartmann, Joan; Williams, Das
Cc: Cregar, Jennifer; Watkins, Ashley
Subject: Letter to BoS re: ECAP Update - December 11, 2018 - Item #2
Attachments: CoastalConservancy ECAP BoS 20181211.pdf

Re: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Meeting - December 11, 2018 – Energy and Climate Action Plan – Agenda Item #2

Honorable Supervisors,

Please see attached letter in support of staff's recommendation.

Thank you,
Rachel

Rachel Couch | Central Coast Project Manager
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December 7, 2018

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
c/o Clerk of the Board
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Agenda Item #2 – Energy and Climate Action Plan – 2017 Progress Report

Honorable Supervisors,

The State Coastal Conservancy offers its full support of the Sustainability Division’s recommendations to update the Energy and Climate Action Plan (ECAP) to: establish a new 2030 GHG reduction target; include GHG reduction and climate resiliency actions; employ a regional approach inclusive of interested neighboring jurisdictions and community representatives; and report ECAP implementation progress on a three-year cycle.

Conservancy staff has worked with local jurisdictional staff in SB County and up and down the Central Coast on sharing tools, resources and building support for coastal climate adaptation and resilience. We are encouraged by SB County staff’s efforts to engage with the community and other jurisdictions to find opportunities for synergy and collaboration on GHG reduction and climate adaption and resiliency measures Countywide. As staff has correctly stated, an all hands on deck approach is urgently needed now to begin to plan for and adapt to the many anticipated impacts of climate change on communities.

The Coastal Conservancy is an agency that can fund conservation, restoration and other nature-based projects that can serve multiple beneficial purposes, including climate adaptation. These projects will ideally flow out of community engagement efforts that seek to plan for the impacts of climate change based on vulnerability assessments of community assets. These assets can be natural ecosystems like beaches, bluffs, wetlands, floodplains, and watersheds, or the many man-made infrastructure systems that communities depend on. The community itself and its members are an asset that needs to be authentically engaged, including those who are vulnerable who should be central to the planning effort.


Recent international, national and statewide climate assessment reports agree that local jurisdictions are on the front lines of these impacts, are experiencing them now, and will need to approach these and intensifying and increasingly frequent problems in new and creative ways through the lens of risk avoidance of extreme, unpredictable, compounding and cascading effects. An interdepartmental team utilizing a long-term multi-disciplinary approach could go a long way toward better understanding and addressing problems, while connecting the dots between near-term disaster response and longer term changes they point to, with their associated social, economic and physical effects.

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Sustainability Division staff are right on target to want to expand the ECAP to integrate resilience actions into GHG reduction efforts and to take a regional approach. I urge the County to do the following in addition to supporting staff's recommendations:

- a) Join the Central Coast Climate Collaborative (4C) <http://www.centralcoastclimate.org/>. The Collaborative is a member organization Central Coast Climate Collaborative is a membership organization fostering a network of local and regional community leaders throughout six Central Coast counties to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Collaborative involves representatives from local and regional government, business and agriculture, academia, and diverse community groups to share information and best practices, leverage efforts and resources and identify critical issues and needs. The Collaborative will engage all communities throughout the region to help ensure a resilient and low-carbon Central Coast prepared for the impacts of climate change. Collaborative will engage with other collaboratives throughout the state. The 4C is part of the Alliance for Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation (ARCCA) <http://arccacalifornia.org/>.
- b) Strengthen the County's commitment to interdepartmental and cross-jurisdictional efforts to align processes to develop robust community-driven and community-vetted plans that address the spectrum of locally projected risks and vulnerabilities. The County's multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan is an example of a document that should include robust, relevant climate adaptation and resilience projects, which will qualify for pre-disaster mitigation and/or post-disaster funding. Aligning planning efforts can help the County and other jurisdictions avoid reactive and costly "emergency" projects that can be effectively planned for in advance.
- c) Strongly support and defend policies that encourage carbon farming, sustainable grazing practices, floodplain conservation, sediment management/beach nourishment, dune restoration, wetland and watershed resources and coastal bluff protection, vegetation assemblages that protect uplands watershed soils, coastal retreat, agricultural buffers, home hardening, and water conservation. Enforce urban limit lines, provide migration corridors, and protect open space. These are some nature based adaptation strategies with other co-benefits.
- d) Hire dedicated staff to write grants to fund climate adaptation and resilience efforts. Federal and state disaster funding is not guaranteed in the future. "Resilience" is the new "sustainability", but with a sense of existential urgency that requires immediate action. Good planning takes a long time and concerted effort, especially on the scale that is now needed.

In summary, Coastal Conservancy staff strongly supports staff's recommendation to expand the ECAP to include resiliency actions into its scope to integrate climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Resources, tools and funding exist at the state level (<http://www.opr.ca.gov/planning/icarp/>) that can assist in this effort.

Sincerely,

Rachel Couch, Project Manager
Central Coast Program