



2.0 PLANNING PROCESS

2.1 Overview of the Public Works Plan Planning Process

The planning process for the Pismo State Beach and Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) Public Works Plan (PWP) involved many steps, including:

- gathering data;
- researching the parks' existing conditions, including reviewing existing survey data and technical and planning documents;
- developing and evaluating improvement project concepts and programs;
- gathering public input throughout the planning process;
- conducting meetings with key stakeholder groups, agencies, and Native American tribes;
- conducting surveys as necessary for missing information, including a supplemental cultural resources survey and inventory, a traffic survey, and reconnaissance-level surveys for natural resources;
- mapping sensitive biological resources, including wetlands and riparian areas and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) based on existing information and surveys conducted by district staff and by the HCP planning team;
- and performing a noise and sound assessment.

Existing conditions information and input received from State Parks staff, park visitors, stakeholders, public agencies, Native American tribes, and local communities were reviewed and considered during the PWP development. Ongoing coordination with Coastal Commission staff and executives were also important parts of the planning process.

2.1.1 Public Outreach and Stakeholder Involvement

During PWP development, the planning team implemented a comprehensive public outreach and stakeholder engagement process. The specific steps and methods used to gather public input are shown in Figure 2-1, PWP Timeline.

The purpose of the public outreach process was to provide the public and stakeholders with meaningful opportunities to become actively involved in the PWP development.

The planning team held four public meeting/workshops, several stakeholder meetings, and agency-specific meetings to present planning updates and gather input. They also created and maintained a project website, conducted a park visitor survey, sent project updates through email and mail to PWP subscribers, the media, and agencies, and developed project materials. These efforts are described in more detail in Section 2.1.2 through 2.1.4. See Sections 2.1.5 Coastal Commission Involvement and 2.3 Planning Considerations for further information about State Parks meetings with the Coastal Commission.



	Spring–Summer 2018		Fall 2018– Spring 2019	Summer 2019 –Fall 2020	Winter 2020–2021	Spring 2021
PWP AND EIR	Step 1: Initiate Project and EIR Scoping	Step 2: Gather Data and Study Existing Conditions and Resources	Step 3: Develop and Evaluate PWP Project Concepts	Step 4: Prepare Draft PWP	Step 5: Public Review of Draft PWP and EIR	Step 6: Approve Final PWP and Certify EIR
PUBLIC OUTREACH	Notice of Preparation Public Workshop 1 Introduction/ EIR Scoping	Website Launch Visitor Survey Fact Sheet	Website Activity Collect comments on project concepts Public Workshop 2 Project concepts discussion	Website Activity Collect comments on proposed project concepts Fact Sheet Public Workshop 3 Present proposed project concepts	Release and Public Review of Draft PWP and EIR Notice of Availability Notice of Completion	Release of Final PWP and EIR Notice of Determination

Figure 2-1. PWP Timeline

2.1.2 Agency Coordination

From the project’s onset in May 2018, State Parks staff met with San Luis Obispo County planning staff and other key state and local agencies to gather input and provide updates on the PWP planning process. Additionally, agencies and community groups that participated in meetings held by State Parks in December 2019 and February 2020 include:

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans);
- City of Pismo Beach;
- Oceano Advisory Council;
- Oceano Communities Services District;
- San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District; and
- San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

Meetings held by State Parks or in which State Parks participated include:

- Guadalupe City Council Meeting – June 25, 2019
- State Parks Agency Groups Stakeholder Meeting – December 11, 2019
- State Parks Agency Groups Stakeholder Meeting – February 11, 2020
- Guadalupe City Council Meeting – February 11, 2020
- California Coastal Conservancy Meeting – February 20, 2020

- Oceano Beach Community Association Meeting – March 5, 2020



2.1.3 Native American Consultation

State Parks issued Departmental Notice No. 2007-05, Native American Consultation Policy and Implementation Procedures, in November 2007. The notice sets forth State Parks' policy for consultation with Native American tribes about activities that affect their heritage, sacred sites, and cultural traditions. Additionally, in September 2011, Governor Brown ordered State agencies to "encourage communication and consultation with California Indian Tribes...and permit elected officials and representatives of tribal governments to provide meaningful input" (Governor's Executive Order B-10-11). State Parks conducts Native American consultation per Departmental Notice 2007-05 and Governor's Executive Order B-10-11.

As part of Native American consultation, State Parks contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on May 29, 2018, regarding the PWP project area and requested a search of the NAHC Sacred Land Files and Native American Contacts List. The NAHC responded on June 4, 2018, indicating that Native American cultural sites were present, and provided a list of 12 Native American tribes who may know cultural resources in the project area. Contact letters were mailed out to each of these tribes on June 15, 2018. Follow-up letters were mailed out in April 2019. Responses were received from three tribes, and State Parks met with representatives from each of those tribes on July 25, 2018. Additionally, on February 13, 2020, State Parks held a meeting and project site tour with a representative of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council.

2.1.4 Public Involvement

2.1.4.1 Communications

The PWP planning team used a variety of communication methods to engage the public in the planning process.

a) Public Works Plan Project Website

The PWP project website (www.oceanodunespwp.com) contains:

- information about the planning process, including background documents (scoping report, meeting materials, public meeting comment summaries, visitor's survey summary, etc.);
- announcements for upcoming meetings;
- public outreach messages and stakeholder meeting materials and reports;
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);



Screenshot of PWP Website



- an email subscriber form and email address for general questions.

All materials used during public and stakeholder meetings were posted on the website to allow those unable to attend to review and comment on the PWP.

b) Notifications/Reminders

1) Email Blasts

Throughout the PWP planning process, the planning team sent announcements via email and the postal service to the subscriber list. Information about the email blasts are shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1. Email Blasts

Email Blast	Date Sent	Number of Subscribers
Save the Date for PWP Planning and EIR Scoping Meetings Announcement of identical meetings scheduled for Arroyo Grande on May 22, 2018, and Fresno on May 23, 2018	April 30, 2018	280
Notice of Preparation of an EIR and Scoping Meetings Announce filing of a Notice of Preparation for an EIR and invite comments on the PWP planning process and scope of the EIR. The email also provided additional details on the two upcoming meetings in Arroyo Grande and Fresno and how to give comments during the EIR scoping period	May 10, 2018	218
PWP Planning and EIR Scoping Period Reminder to subscribers how to submit comments on the PWP planning process and EIR scoping and the deadline for comment submission, which included a link to the public meeting materials.	May 30, 2018	419
Website Launch and Visitor's Survey Announce the PWP project website's launch at www.oceanodunespwp.com and the start of an online visitor's survey that included both park units. The survey's purpose was to receive input on park usage and suggestions or ideas for future recreational facility and management improvements.	August 16, 2018	525
Visitor's Survey Reminder Remind subscribers about the upcoming deadline to complete the online survey.	September 10, 2018	556
PWP Update Provide an update on project activities, including the visitor's survey, availability of the planning process and EIR Scoping Report, and the next round of public meetings' anticipated timeframe.	September 27, 2018	1,903



Email Blast	Date Sent	Number of Subscribers
Save the Date for PWP Public Meetings Announce two open house-style public meetings in February 2019 to present draft concepts for the PWP. The email also announced the availability of the visitor's survey summary report on the PWP project website.	January 14, 2019	1,890
PWP Public Meetings Update Announce upcoming meeting details, scheduled for February 11, 2019, in Arroyo Grande and Tulare on February 19, 2019.	January 25, 2019	1,872
PWP Comment Reminder Remind subscribers to provide comments on the materials presented at the February 2019 public meetings. The email also provided information on how to submit comments and links to meeting materials.	February 22, 2019	1,882
PWP Comment Deadline Extension Announce deadline for providing comments on the materials presented at the February 2019 public meetings. The deadline was extended to March 19, 2019. The email also provided information on how to submit comments and links to meeting materials.	March 5, 2019	2,058
PWP Comment Summary and FAQs Available Announce the PWP Comment Summary's availability on the Draft Concepts and a new FAQs document on the website.	June 28, 2019	2,364
Save the Date for PWP Public Meetings (December 2019) Announce two public meetings to present proposed project concepts and options for the PWP. Identical meetings were scheduled for Arroyo Grande and Bakersfield on December 10 and 11, 2019, respectively.	November 12, 2019	2,390
PWP Comment Reminder Reminder to subscribers to provide comments on the materials presented at the December 2019 public meetings. The email also provided information on how to submit comments and links to meeting materials.	January 13, 2020	2,481
PWP Follow-up Comment Reminder Follow-up reminder to subscribers with the upcoming deadline to provide comments on the materials presented at the December 2019 public meetings. The email also provided information on how to submit comments and links to meeting materials.	January 21, 2020	2,490



Email Blast	Date Sent	Number of Subscribers
PWP Comment Summary and FAQs Available Announce the PWP Comment Summary's availability on the Proposed Project Concepts and Park-wide PWP Proposed Options, as well as the Spring 2020 FAQs, and provide links to these documents on the website.	May 27, 2020	2,516

2) Mailers

The planning team mailed flyers to interested stakeholders who provided only a physical mailing address (between 247 and 258 subscribers) to announce the following planning activities (see event descriptions above):

- Save the Date for PWP Planning and EIR Scoping Meetings
- Visitor's Survey
- Save the Date for PWP Public Meetings (February 2019)
- Save the Date for PWP Public Meetings (December 2019)

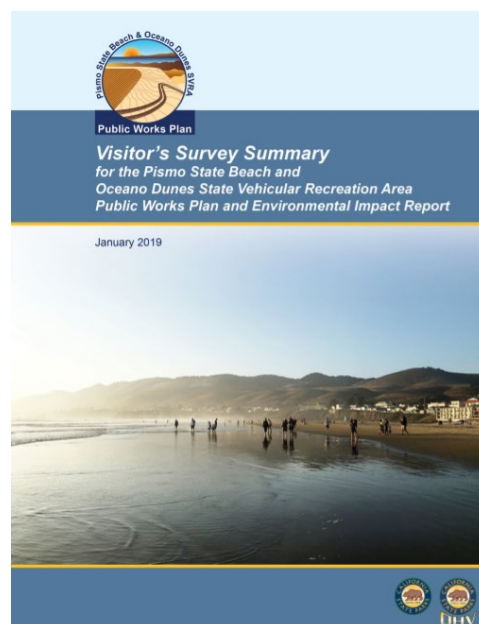
c) Frequently Asked Questions

The PWP planning team developed FAQs that were posted to the project website in June 2019. The FAQs provided a summary of the PWP content, status and timeline, and how the PWP differs from other concurrent District planning efforts (i.e., Habitat Conservation Plan and Particulate Matter Reduction Plan).

In May 2020, the PWP planning team updated the FAQs and posted them to the project website. The Spring 2020 FAQs provided updates on the PWP and EIR status, timeline, and other interest topics.

2.1.4.2 Visitor's Survey

Members of the PWP planning team conducted a parkwide visitor's survey from August 16 through September 16, 2018. The survey provided an opportunity for interested stakeholders to participate in the planning process by providing input on their park usage, visitor experience, and suggestions for future recreational facility and management improvements. State Parks advertised the survey on the Department's and project's websites and sent email blasts and mailer announcements. Members of the PWP planning team distributed postcards announcing the survey while on foot to visitors in all areas of the parks,



Visitor's Survey Summary Cover Page



including at Oso Flaco Lake, park entrance and campground kiosks, and the visitor center. The team also distributed postcards to local destinations, like businesses, government offices (city halls), recreation vehicle parks, visitor centers, and chambers of commerce. These locations were generally in Oceano, Pismo Beach, Grover Beach, and Arroyo Grande, as well as other surrounding cities such as San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria, Paso Robles, Atascadero, and Templeton. A summary of the survey results was posted to the PWP project website in January 2019.

A total of 4,075 people participated in the survey of 20 questions, which fell into three categories:

- Demographics of the respondents and their companions
- Visitor experience
- Possible improvements to the visitor experience at the parks



**Public Meeting, Pismo Beach,
February 11, 2019**

2.1.4.3 In-person Meetings

Listening Session

On November 20, 2017, State Parks held a “listening session” to provide a forum for the public to learn about the PWP process and provide input on their vision for visitor experiences and recreational opportunities. An official transcript of the meeting was initially posted on the State Parks website and the PWP website once established. Approximately 100 people attended the listening session, and 30 people spoke.

PWP Planning and Environmental Impact Report Scoping Meetings

The PWP planning team held identical meetings in Arroyo Grande (May 22, 2018) and Fresno (May 23, 2018) to initiate the PWP planning and environmental review process. The public was encouraged to provide input about recreational opportunities and experiences, park operations, and programs. The meetings also served as scoping for the



**PWP Planning and EIR Scoping
Meeting, Arroyo Grande, May 22, 2018**



EIR, and attendees had the opportunity to provide input on the scope of the environmental analysis. Approximately 57 people attended the scoping meeting in Arroyo Grande, and 39 people attended the scoping meeting in Fresno. Materials from the meetings were posted on the PWP website.

Also, a scoping report was posted on the website in September 2018 that included transcripts of oral comments provided at the meetings. Copies of written comments received during the scoping comment period (May 9 - June 9, 2018) were also included. A total of 100 written comments were received from public agencies, local organizations, Native American Tribes, and individuals.

Public Works Plan Public Meetings (Draft Project Concepts)

The planning team held public meetings to discuss the PWP in Pismo Beach (February 11, 2019) and Tulare (February 19, 2019). At these open house-style meetings, attendees visited topic stations to view materials that described draft concepts for PWP Development Projects to provide input to the planning team. Approximately 67 people attended the meeting in Pismo Beach, and 20 people participated in the Tulare meeting. Materials from the meetings were posted on the PWP website for public comment. The comment period was open from February 11 - March 19, 2019. A total of 588 comments were received. A comment summary was posted to the PWP website.



**Public Meeting, Arroyo Grande,
December 10, 2019**

Public Works Plan Public Meetings (Proposed Project Concepts)

The PWP planning team held public meetings in Arroyo Grande (December 10, 2019) and Bakersfield (December 11, 2019). At these open house-style meetings, attendees visited topic stations to view materials that described the PWP Development Project concepts and parkwide PWP options. Approximately 68 people attended the meeting in Arroyo Grande, and 19 people participated in the meeting in Bakersfield. Materials from the meetings were posted on the PWP website for public comment. The comment period was open from December 10, 2019 - January 24, 2020. A total of 717 comments were received. A comment summary was posted to the PWP website.

Stakeholder Group Meetings

In July 2019, the PWP planning team held three focused stakeholder meetings with representatives from groups that had participated in the planning process:

- OHV stakeholder groups - July 29, 2019
- Non-OHV stakeholder groups - July 30, 2019
- Community organizations - July 31, 2019



**OHV Stakeholder Group Meeting,
Sacramento, February 11, 2019**



The purpose of the meetings was to update the PWP planning process and discuss the goals and planning context for the PWP. The first meeting was held in Sacramento, and the two subsequent meetings were held in Oceano. Approximately 11 people attended the July 29 meeting, 21 people attended the July 30 meeting, and 14 people attended the July 31 meeting. Meeting materials were posted on the PWP website.

The planning team also held a stakeholder meeting for local and state agencies in Oceano (See Section 2.1.2, Agency Coordination). The purpose of the meeting was to provide attendees with the opportunity to speak with the PWP planning team and learn about the PWP and proposed concepts for three PWP Development Projects of most interest to the stakeholders: the Butterfly Grove Public Access Project, the Pismo State Beach Boardwalk Project, and the Oso Flaco Improvement Project.

2.1.4.4 Website Activities

Materials from the public meetings were posted on the PWP website for comment using an online comment card or sending an email to the provided address.

Additionally, the visitor's survey could be filled out by the public on the PWP website from August 16 - September 16, 2018.

2.1.5 Coastal Commission Involvement

The PWP planning team engaged in regular meetings with Coastal Commission executive staff throughout the planning process. Additionally, State Parks staff provided quarterly updates on the PWP at Coastal Commission meetings in 2019 and 2020. Engagement with the Coastal Commission is outlined below.

- Coastal Commission Staff Tour & Meeting – September 2019;
- Coastal Commission Meeting Updates – July 2019, October 2019, February 2020, and July 2020.



Site tour on September 2019

2.2 Environmental Justice

California Government Code Section (§) 65040.12 (e) defines environmental justice as

... the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

The California Attorney General's Office requires that environmental justice be addressed in local government general planning documents, that planners engage with environmental justice communities, and that air quality analyzes be completed. While not a local government agency, State Parks is addressing environmental justice in all its planning efforts.

In March 2019, the California State Legislature amended the Coastal Act to address environmental justice concerns as follows:

The Legislature further finds and declares that to advance the principles of environmental justice and equality, subdivision (a) of Section 11135 of the Government Code and subdivision (e) of Section 65040.12 of the Government Code apply to the Commission and all public agencies implementing the provisions of this division. As required by Section 11135 of the Government Code, no person in the State of California, based on race, national origin, ethnic group identification, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, color, genetic information, or disability, shall be unlawfully denied full and equal access to the benefits of, or be unlawfully subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered according to this division, is funded directly by the state for purposes of this division, or receives any financial assistance from the state per this division (PRC§30013).

The legislation provided the Coastal Commission with authority to consider environmental justice when making CDP decisions, and adopted an "Environmental Justice Policy" in March 2019 to guide its implementation. The policy recognizes the Coastal Commission's commitment to protecting coastal natural resources and providing public access and lower-cost recreational opportunities for everyone. The Coastal Commission also strives to ensure "equitable access to clean, healthy, and accessible coastal environments for communities that have been disproportionately overburdened by pollution or with natural resources that have been subjected to permanent damage for the benefit of wealthier communities." (California Coastal Commission, 2019, p. 4).

The purpose of the policy is described as a way:

"...to empower these communities [as defined in the Policy] that have been historically excluded from accessing the benefits of coastal development and resources due to discriminatory implementation of local, state, and federal policies and lack of access to the process and decision-makers." (California Coastal Commission, 2019, p. 4).

The policy also includes a series of principles that guide the approach (California Coastal Commission, 2019, pp. 6-12).



State Parks is strongly committed to applying environmental justice to all its planning efforts to serve all Californians equally. State Parks also manages about

one-third of California's coastline and recognizes the Coastal Commission policy's importance in providing equitable access to coastal resources. The development of this PWP has followed the Coastal Commission's Statement of Environmental Principles and State Park's guidance regarding environmental justice when planning and developing the PWP's goals, principles, programs, and projects. The following sections specifically describe how State Parks has integrated environmental justice principles into the PWP planning process and intends to keep implementing them during PWP implementation. For more detailed information on State Parks associated efforts to develop a community engagement and outreach program to assist in addressing environmental justice issues for the District see Section 2.3.1.4.

2.2.1 Respecting Tribal Concerns

The District regularly consults with the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, and the Yak Tityu Tityu Yak Tilhini community regarding education, park operations, resource management, and proposed plans and projects. Section 2.1.3 of this document describes the consultation conducted during the PWP planning process. Representatives from these tribes attended PWP public meetings and provided comments to the PWP planning team. They also offered remarks at Coastal Commission hearings that included updates on the PWP planning process. Native American consultation is an ongoing and long-term engagement, and the District is committed to continuing consultation during the implementation of the PWP.

2.2.2 Meaningful Engagement

District staff are very involved in the communities served by the parks, including those locally as well as more distant, such as in the Central Valley, where a lot of park visitors live. The PWP built upon the District's existing interpretation and education programs to connect with traditional and non-traditional audiences during the PWP planning process. The PWP planning team also developed a long-term outreach program with underserved communities. This engagement program will continue during PWP implementation and beyond.

2.2.3 Coastal Access

The Coastal Act mandates full access and recreational opportunities for everyone by directing the state to protect, encourage, and provide lower-cost visitor and recreational opportunities and embody fundamental environmental justice principles. During the PWP planning process, State Parks collaborated with Native American tribes, community organizations, local governments, State agencies, residents, and park visitors to maximize coastal access opportunities, particularly by low income and underserved communities. For example, the PWP planning team met with local and state transportation authorities about improving access to park entrances and destinations, connecting recreational trails to local and regional networks, and improving public transportation to the parks.

Proposed projects in the PWP that preserve and enhance coastal access include:

- improve park infrastructure at entrances, day-use, and staging areas;
- ensure facilities are ADA-compliant (e.g., trails, restrooms, picnic areas, campgrounds);



- improve existing and develop new trails for pedestrian, equestrian, bicyclist, and OHV uses;
- connect park trails with regional recreational trails;
- improve existing camping areas and add several hundred low-cost campsites to help compensate for campsites lost by implementation of non-PWP mandates;
- improve vehicular access and public transportation to the coast for recreational activities;
- when possible, separate motorized access from non-motorized access to the parks; and
- improve existing or create new educational facilities and amenities.

State Parks will continue to collaborate with its constituents during PWP approval and implementation.

2.2.4 Housing

The Coastal Commission's policy on environmental justice supports measures that protect existing affordable housing. Currently, Pismo State Beach has 185 developed campsites. Oceano Dunes SVRA has 1,000 campsites (i.e., up to 1,000 camping vehicles are allowed per night anywhere within the open riding area on the beach)¹. The primitive camping offered at Oceano Dunes SVRA provides a very low-cost camping opportunity. At ten dollars, the camping fee is the lowest available in the District (fees at North Beach and Oceano campgrounds range from \$35 to \$50). The PWP Development Projects will enhance existing camping facilities with accessibility and facility improvements to the North Beach and Oceano Campgrounds. It also includes two new campgrounds with primitive and developed campsites. Furthermore, the Development Projects preserve or expand affordable District staff housing.

2.2.5 Local Government

The Coastal Commission encourages local governments to amend their LCPs, public works plans, and long-range development plans to address environmental justice issues. These issues include reducing impacts on disadvantaged communities from new development and providing public transportation from inland areas to the coast.

State Parks conducted a thorough consistency review of the five LCPs applicable to the PWP planning area (see Volume 1, Chapter 4). Throughout PWP development, the planning team met with local government officials to discuss the proposed Development Projects and preliminary findings of the LCP consistency reviews. State Parks also collaborated with regional transportation authorities to improve safe access to park entrances from Highway 1, make connections to regional recreational trails, and improve public transportation to and from the parks.

¹Per day use limits set forth in CDP 4-82-300-A5. In January 2020, State Parks administratively reduced beach campsites to 500 units. The PWP proposes an interim reduction of 500 beach campsites until a carrying capacity study is conducted.



2.2.6 Accountability and Transparency

The Coastal Commission Environmental Justice policy of Accountability and Transparency states that when evaluating projects, programs, and activities, it shall consider whether and how a proposed development will positively or negatively affect marginalized communities and be fully transparent that analysis in staff reports and presentations. In this policy's spirit, the planning team considered the effect of Development Projects on visitors and residents. During the planning process, State Parks implemented a robust public outreach effort to learn about visitor and resident needs and desires. The outreach effort included several opportunities to review plan proposals and provide feedback and quarterly progress updates at OHMVR Commission and Coastal Commission meetings.

2.2.7 Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise

Climate change and sea-level rise hazards will have disproportionate impacts on communities with the least capacity to adapt and may exacerbate existing environmental injustices and cumulative effects from other environmental hazards.

State Park policy on sea-level rise is to

...evaluate the potential impacts of sea-level rise, coastal storm surge, and other extreme events on all new projects, facilities, and resource protection efforts in low-lying or susceptible areas of coastal park units. Each coastal project, facility, or plan potentially impacted by mean sea level rise be evaluated as part of the project development process... (California State Parks, 2014).

PWP Development Projects were designed to minimize the effects of sea-level rise, where possible, and improve access to recreation, the beach, and dunes. State Parks is currently undertaking a comprehensive update of its Sea Level Rise and Climate Change Policy, which is expected to be published in early 2021. Refer to Volume 1, Section 3.1 for a more comprehensive description of State Park policies regarding this topic.

2.3 Planning Considerations

This section describes issues and concerns that arose during the PWP planning process. It includes key topics from public meetings, stakeholder groups, and agencies that apply to proposed PWP projects, management actions, and park operations described in Volume 1, Chapter 3 of this plan. This section also includes special conditions and concerns addressed by the Coastal Commission and its staff throughout the planning process.

2.3.1 Coastal Commission Conditions and Concerns

2.3.1.1 Increase Predator Management

Implement an improved predator management plan, including enclosures for trash and food waste and BMPs for addressing predation of sensitive species (including coyotes, raccoons, skunks, opossums, ravens, gulls, owls, and peregrine falcons).

Current Practices

State Parks currently has several programs and practices to manage predators, including predator monitoring and trash management programs. Also, staff are currently



collaborating with the CDFW on a biodiversity management plan for the parks, providing predator management guidance.

Monitoring

As part of ongoing predator management efforts, State Parks staff and contractors (Bloom Biological Inc., Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services, and Point Blue) routinely collect information on predator presence at Oceano Dunes SVRA during the breeding season. Monitors observe mammalian and avian predators and their signs (e.g., tracks, scat, regurgitated pellets, prey remains, depredated nests) each day on foot and from vehicles. They record species, type of sign, behavior (if observed), duration of observation, direction of travel, and any characteristics that may identify an individual predator. Gull monitoring is also conducted during the breeding season. Staff count gulls at the trash dumpster area weekly and survey the entire shoreline for gulls monthly or as Natural Resources staff are available. State Parks maintains a comprehensive predator control program at Oceano Dunes SVRA that includes fencing, predator deterrents, hazing, and the option of live capture or lethal removal of problem predators. This program has been successful at deterring depredation for more than 20 years.

Refuse Disposal

Park districts establish rules and regulations (Superintendent's Orders) regarding refuse disposal specific to individual units. In the Oceano Dunes District, Superintendent's Order 554-004-2020, Refuse Disposal, prohibits importing waste into the parks, disturbing trash containers, and dumping hazardous materials.

The District's Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP), completed in February 2019, includes a trash assessment that established a baseline for each of the camping and parking areas. Trash reduction measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) were identified for waste storage areas that focus on sediment control, erosion control, pollution prevention, and good housekeeping. The District has also been implementing the BMPs to ensure continuous progress towards meeting the desired trash load baselines identified in the SWMP. These BMPs include covering all waste containers and securing them during high wind events, cleaning any trash on the ground, and avoiding overfilling waste containers.

The District is also subject to the amendments regarding refuse disposal adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) in April 2015 for the SWRCB's Water Quality Control Plan for the Ocean Waters of California.

The PWP will expand on these predator control measures by codifying current BMPs and incorporating measures identified in the SWMP, HCP, and the parks' Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan (WHPP). See Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 3.5.6.1 for more information on the WHPP and Section 3.4.6, Trash Enclosure at Post 2/Beach Trash Management, for specific proposed trash enclosure and trash management actions.

PWP Recommendations

- Identify specific locations for trash enclosures and a schedule for service with measures to modify the number and size of enclosures and service based on regular monitoring.
- Fully implement the HCP following approval by USFWS. Activities covered by the HCP include mechanical trash removal and trash control. The draft HCP



includes implementing a predator management plan for monitoring, habitat enhancement, and necropsy and analysis of western snowy plover and California least tern carcasses.

- Fully implement the District's WHPP and the SWMP.

2.3.1.2 Increase Operational Enforcement

Increase enforcement of all vehicular use limits, all vehicular speed limits, and all other vehicular requirements, including additional signs, rangers, and parameters to verify that the number of vehicles in the Park does not exceed maximum allowances.

Current Practices

District staff comply with the current use limits outlined in the CDP. Those limits include about 2,500 street-legal vehicles, 1,700 OHVs, and 1,000 campsites. Staff use counters at the entry kiosks to count vehicles as they enter the parks. Independence Day and Memorial Day weekends are typically the only days when vehicle use limits are reached. Once capacity is reached, additional vehicles are prohibited from entry. As of January 1, 2020, beach camping was reduced to 500 vehicles according to the recommended treatments in San Luis Obispo APCD's Stipulated Order.

To assist in developing appropriate public safety measures, State Parks analyzes incident records from Oceano Dunes SVRA. An inventory tool, the Oceano Dunes Incident Map, was developed to help identify accident hot spots to determine the most appropriate public safety measures. State Parks continues to evolve the process of monitoring and reporting incidents.

State Parks staff also reviewed all current OHV concession agreements to ensure they contained appropriate safety protocols and that those protocols are being enforced. Each concessionaire was asked to review their respective contracts for requirements involving vehicle staging and safety education. State Parks also instructed concessionaires to inspect all equipment (e.g., vehicles, helmets, and safety gear) to ensure they meet contract requirements and the manufacturer's standards.

Additional measures proposed in the PWP to ensure accurate visitor and vehicle counts include the following.

PWP Recommendations

- Construct a lifeguard observation tower and new restrooms at the existing restroom facility at the Grand Avenue entrance to provide additional oversight and enforcement and decrease response times.
- Increase staffing hours at the entrance stations and implement various methods (e.g., traffic sensors) to ensure accurate vehicle counts.
- Install additional regulatory signage at entrance stations and throughout the parks.
- Replace the entrance stations at Grand and Pier avenues with modern facilities that can apply new technology to help manage visitor use and track visitor numbers.



2.3.1.3 Add Fencing

Install additional fencing in specific areas to protect coastal resources (including fencing in the south Oso Flaco Lake area, fencing suitable for enhanced predator management, fencing to define the southern enclosure better, and fencing to ensure all vegetated dune areas are appropriately fenced off).

Current Practices

State Parks has an ongoing fence management program that includes the maintenance and regular replacement of over 35 miles of fencing. Maintenance includes erecting fencing, replacing damaged fencing, and moving sand away from fence lines or towards fence lines as needed using heavy equipment.

State Parks routinely contracts for assistance from the California Conservation Corps staff for fence repair.

The current fencing program includes:

- Nine miles of perimeter fencing that delineates where visitors can recreate;
- Over 12 miles of fencing to protect vegetation islands in the dunes;
- About 4.2 miles of linear shorebird nesting fencing, including layers of fencing above and below ground, resulting in a total of about 8.4 miles of fencing;
- Almost one mile of symbolic fencing around Oso Flaco Lake; and
- Eight miles of wind fence to address air quality concerns

Additional measures proposed in the PWP to enhance current fencing practices include the following.

PWP Recommendations

- Identify methods (e.g., video monitoring or in-person surveillance) to increase fence monitoring to protect coastal resources such as vegetated dunes and the South Oso Flaco Lake area.
- Continue regular inspections and maintenance of installed fencing to identify repair and replacement needs.
- Use heavy equipment to move sand to maintain existing fencing's operational efficiency, including the seasonal snowy plover enclosure.
- Identify strategies to improve air quality, including dune stabilization, installation of wind fencing, and ongoing studies with monitoring, data collection, and analysis.

2.3.1.4 Enhance Public Outreach

Institute a public outreach program to increase the use of appropriate beach and dune areas by lower-income, youth, and tribal parties.



Current Practices

State Parks is currently conducting three separate outreach efforts; one each for the PWP, the Stipulated Order of Abatement (SOA) with the San Luis Obispo County APCD, and the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) with the USFWS to address environmental concerns and engage the public in these efforts. Also, in summer 2020, the District staff implemented a permanent public outreach and community engagement program. The program intends to increase State Parks' understanding of underserved communities' needs, non-traditional visitors, and those with language and cultural barriers; to engage residents, particularly in Oceano and surrounding communities; and identify contacts and opportunities for long-term community engagement.

A key component of the outreach plan was in-person engagement, focusing on English and Spanish surveys at community events and gathering places. State Parks researched potential events and locations for conducting the survey and developed survey questions. However, since March 2020, staff have had to find other ways to connect with residents due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the pandemic, staff implemented some alternative, short-term public outreach efforts. These efforts include phone and video conferencing with local group leaders, organizations, and agencies, including the Rural Community Development Corporation of California, Latino Outdoors, Audubon Society, parent-teacher associations, and the Lucia Mar and Santa Maria School Districts. State Parks is working with leaders from these groups, as well as reaching out to other community based local organizations, to encourage their members to complete an online survey in place of the postponed meetings. The goal of this initial community engagement program effort is to identify individuals and organizations that can best build relationships for better understanding these underserved and underrepresented constituents and their interests and concerns.

The District continues to provide 2,800 hours of educational programming each year, including a wide variety of interpretive programs for students and youth. District-wide educational programming reached approximately 108,000 visitors in 2019. The District has a team of interpreters, seasonal staff, and volunteers that run a visitor center and manage educational and community outreach programs. The distance-learning program, PORTS, has been implemented to deliver live virtual field trips using an approved curriculum to school children who cannot travel to the parks. Short video presentations about the District and its resources are also available on social media websites like YouTube.

Additional measures proposed in the PWP to enhance public outreach and education include the following.

PWP Recommendations

- Continue the PWP, HCP, and SOA public outreach efforts while establishing the permanent program to increase understanding of the beach and dune areas' appropriate use by lower-income populations, youth, and tribal parties.
- Improve existing education facilities and provide bus access to the Oso Flaco Day Use Area to create new opportunities for school groups and visitors to participate in a wide variety of interpretation, educational, and recreational programs.



- Install interpretive facilities, such as educational panels, kiosks, audio tours, and multi-language materials, at park entrance stations, campfire centers, the Monarch Butterfly Grove, and the Oso Flaco and the Pismo Beach boardwalk.
- Enhance outreach efforts to underserved communities and non-traditional users, including youth, tribal parties, and lower-income residents, using technology and social media.
- Engage with partners, such as existing and potential businesses and nonprofits and community-based and statewide organizations, for input and assistance to increase access to quality interpretative programs for under-represented groups.

2.3.1.5 Eliminate the Technical Review Team

Replace [the Technical Review Team] with an annual reporting program processed through the Executive Director's review and approval.

Current Practices

Since its inception, the Technical Review Team (TRT) has met annually to review the programs' status and other requirements of the CDP and provide a report to the Coastal Commission. The last report was presented in January 2019.

PWP Recommendations

- Develop a monitoring and reporting program of coastal resource protection measures identified in the PWP.

2.3.1.6 Add Special Events Protocols

Require a separate CDP for all special events that could adversely impact coastal resources, including music festivals, concerts, OHV events (e.g., Huckfest), and any other special events that propose an intensity of use beyond those specified in the CDP.

Current Practices

The District does not permit special events that can harm coastal resources. District staff follow the Department's special event policies, address city and county concerns, and comply with all state and federal regulations for resource protection, including established vehicle limits for the Park and conducting environmental analysis as required by CEQA. Also, District resource staff survey the special event area before an event and report any potential concerns.

PWP Recommendations

- Identify the most appropriate areas in the parks for special events and adapt these areas to limit activities to specific locations where management of events and mitigation of potential impacts are feasible.
- Continue to require CEQA review and regulatory permitting, including a CDP as appropriate.

2.3.1.7 Prohibit Night Riding

Prohibit vehicular and OHV activity during nighttime hours (i.e., from one hour after sunset and to one-hour before sunrise).



Current Practices

- Currently, night riding is not prohibited.

PWP Recommendations

- The PWP proposes to update a 2005 study of nighttime riding to evaluate potential impacts occurring today. This issue is also identified for further study in the Bio-Diversity Management Plan. This study would include closing the Park to nighttime riding to establish a baseline for impacts. The results of the study will confirm current practices or require operational changes to address impacts.

2.3.1.8 Prohibit Arroyo Grande Creek Crossing

Prohibit vehicular crossings of Arroyo Grande Creek when it flows (i.e., shut down all OHV and camping operations during this time) except for emergency vehicles. Monitor the creek to ensure that users are not allowed south of the creek when it will soon connect to the ocean and provide time for users south of the creek to exit before it relates to the ocean.

Current Practices

Oceano Dunes District has procedures in place to ensure wildlife protection in Arroyo Grande Creek. Currently, District environmental scientists monitor the creek and lagoon seasonally and provide an annual fisheries report to the USFWS that includes updates on the presence of federal and state-listed species, like the tidewater goby. The upper creek and lagoon are closed to vehicle use year-round to protect sensitive aquatic habitat. Pedestrians and equestrians are prohibited in the creek and lagoon during the western snowy plover and California least tern breeding season.

The environmental plans currently in development include the HCP, WHPP, SWMP, and joint CDFW Biodiversity Management Plan which addresses creek crossings. To address the Coastal Commission's concerns, the PWP will recommend the Department study water quality and fisheries populations and adapt regulation of vehicle creek crossings as applicable. To address the Coastal Commission's concern regarding Arroyo Grande Creek and Lagoon, the PWP will recommend the following:

PWP Recommendations

- Enhanced safety and resource protection measures such as closing the creek to vehicular traffic when it reaches the depth of 12 inches
- Explore feasibility of installing a temporary bridge over the creek.
- Study water quality and fisheries populations and adapt regulation of vehicle creek crossings as necessary to ensure protection of water quality and species of concern.

2.3.1.9 Reduce Use Limits

Reduce interim vehicular and OHV daily use limits to an amount proportionate to the acreage that has been removed from vehicular/OHV use (e.g., due to dust control requirements, other enclosures, etc.).



Current Practices

Currently, the Department does not reduce vehicle limits when portions of the Park are closed to public use. To address the concerns of the Coastal Commission, the PWP will make the following recommendations that address use limits for both parks.

PWP Recommendations

- Implement year-round interim vehicle use limits of 500 camping vehicles and sites, 1,000 street-legal vehicles, and 1,000 OHVs per day.
- Update the carrying capacity study to determine appropriate permanent beach camping and day-use limits by OHVs and street-legal vehicles.
- Update vehicle use limits based on the updated carrying capacity study and the availability of new camping facilities.

2.3.1.10 Eliminate Exceptions to Use Limits

Eliminate the four exceptions that allow unlimited vehicular and OHV use on Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving weekends.

Current Practices

The limits on the number of vehicles allowed in the parks were suspended on four days a year: Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving Day weekends. This exemption was eliminated in 2001. To address the Coastal Commission's concern, the PWP will include the following recommendations.

PWP Recommendations

No holiday exemptions to Use Limits will be included in the PWP.

2.3.1.11 Evaluate Entrance Modifications

Evaluate changes that can be made to provide vehicular access into the Park in a way that can reduce coastal resource impacts, particularly as such vehicular access relates to Arroyo Grande Creek crossings. More normal beach uses north of the riding area.

To address the Coastal Commission's concern, the PWP will make the following recommendations.

PWP Recommendations

- Modify park entrances to maximize access for people and vehicles, enhance monitoring and control of vehicle entries, and reduce sand tracking out of the parks.
- Work with CDFW to identify and construct a new, year-round entrance in the Park's southern property.
- Develop and implement BMPs to prevent dust and sand accumulation in the Grover Beach and Oceano communities and incorporate the BMPs into the parks' maintenance programs.



2.3.1.12 Make Seasonal Exclosure Permanent

Make the roughly 300-acre seasonal endangered species exclosure area permanent, and restore the area to enhance habitat.

Current Practices

State Parks is currently collaborating with CDFW to determine a seasonal versus permanent nesting exclosure's biological merits. Once the most effective methodology is agreed upon, it will be incorporated into the HCP. Parameters for the use of exclosures are also included in the WHPP.

To address the concerns of the Coastal Commission, the PWP will make the following recommendations.

PWP Recommendations

- Fully implement the exclosure plan per the draft HCP, and ensure compliance with all other State and federal regulations and the WHPP.
- Analyze the effectiveness of current exclosure practices and identify potential alternatives.
- Follow the recommendations identified in the Biodiversity Management Plan.

2.3.1.13 Allow for Future Closures for Required Dust Control

Allow perimeter fencing or vegetation and related development (e.g., monitoring equipment, etc.) for dust control purposes for all areas specified by the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District.

Current Practices

State Parks is complying with the SOA from the San Luis Obispo County APCD and the conditions of CDP 4-82-300-A5, as amended.

In January 2020, State Parks implemented two large (48 and 20 acres, respectively), temporary dust control measures involving fencing in the fore and back dunes. An additional 4.2 acres of permanent back dune dust control treatments involving fencing and straw mulch to reduce dust were subsequently implemented. This area will also be planted with native vegetation. To address the Coastal Commission's concerns, the PWP proposed the following.

PWP Recommendations

- Address future dust control projects through Oceano Dunes SVRA Dust Control Measures approved in CDP 3-12-050-A1.

2.3.1.14 Indemnification by State Parks/Liability for Costs and Attorney's Fees

This condition identified by the CCC would be directly addressed in the findings approved by the Commission in the final PWP. State Parks will continue to follow the processes identified in the existing Coastal Development Permit until those findings are approved. State



Parks is open to discussing these items with the CCC to ensure a resolution can be found and documented in the final PWP.

2.3.1.15 Special Conditions Conflicts

This conditions identified by the CCC would be directly addressed in the findings approved by the Commission in the final PWP. State Parks will continue to follow the processes identified in the existing Coastal Development Permit until those findings are approved. State Parks is open to discussing these items with the CCC to ensure a resolution can be found and documented in the final PWP.

2.3.2 Other Planning Considerations

2.3.2.1 Staffing Levels

The District currently has several vacant seasonal and permanent staff positions. Like most districts on and near the California coast, the District suffers from low recruitment and retention rates due to the high cost of living in San Luis Obispo County. The PWP includes some permanent staff houses in the Initial Oso Flaco Improvement Project. Still, there needs to be long-term and Department-wide strategies to increase and maintain staffing levels.

2.3.2.2 Operations Facility Space Constraints

Much of the District's operations, including public safety, natural resource management, and facilities management, is conducted out of the Corporation Yard. Each program area maintains vehicles, supplies, and personnel in this small space. Ingress and egress to the Corporation Yard is from State Route 1 and through the Oceano Campground, which creates safety concerns.

Proposed development projects in the PWP would alleviate many of the space constraints for park operations. The Park Corporation Yard and Oso Flaco Improvement projects would relocate some park operations, reorganize existing facilities, and build new facilities for storage, offices, staff residences, and parking. Additionally, the Corporation Yard Project will reroute the access road to avoid the Oceano Campground.

However, the development projects do not address facility constraints for administration and other programs currently located in a rented office in the City of Arroyo Grande. Future projects may move the District office to State Park property to provide better access for the public.

2.3.2.3 Traffic Control, Park Access, and Entrances

During the busy summer months and major holidays, vehicles can queue up on Pier and Grande avenues while waiting to enter the parks. During the PWP planning process, State Parks heard suggestions to improve the entrance experience and reduce the kiosks' vehicle back-up. The proposed Entrance and Kiosk Project will improve vehicle flow through these entrances, but it will not completely resolve the traffic problem during peak visitation periods.

The 1994 general plan amendment analyzed potential new entrance locations south of Pier Avenue (per special conditions of CDP 4-82-300) to relieve user conflicts on the beach between Pier and Grand avenues. The general plan's EIR determined that maintaining the Pier and Grand Avenue entrances is the least environmentally damaging alternative.

The PWP recommends that State Parks pursue opportunities to construct a new entrance south of Pier Avenue to provide direct vehicular access to the back



dunes open riding area (see the Southern Entrance Project in Section 3.3.14 in Chapter 3, Volume 1). This project is conceptual and would require additional land via acquisition, lease, or easement to implement. By redirecting OHV traffic south of Pier Avenue, vehicle crossings at Arroyo Grande Creek would be reduced, and direct access to the open riding area would be provided.

Also, State Parks may consider conducting a comprehensive traffic study of the existing entrance stations. State Parks, Caltrans, and local jurisdictions would use the data and recommendations to improve ingress, egress, and traffic flow to and from these entrances.

2.3.2.4 Grover Lodge Site

The 1994 general plan amendment approved the construction of the Grover Beach Lodge on State Park property that would be located at the northern entry to Pismo State Beach, where Grand Avenue meets the Pacific Ocean. The City of Grover Beach would operate the lodge through a 50-year concession agreement.

2.3.2.5 Managing Recreation Opportunities and Access

During the PWP planning process, State Parks heard from thousands of passionate stakeholders, community groups, government agencies, and visitors who often have conflicting views about park management. Conflicts between recreational users at the parks have been documented since the 1975 general plan.

The PWP proposes development projects and management actions to distribute OHV recreation and provide a direct connection for OHVs into the open riding area. An updated carrying capacity study will help park managers to update day use and camping vehicle limits. Long-term community outreach and safety education strategies will help park managers improve access for all visitors. These proposals will improve some of the conflicts between user groups. However, it will not address the ideological differences that agencies, community groups, and visitors have about the types of recreation allowed at the parks.

2.3.2.6 Managing the Dune Preserve

State Park Peace Officers and other park staff spend time cleaning up transient camps in various park locations, such as the Dunes Preserve. Any development within the parks, such as the Pismo Beach Boardwalk Project, may uncover unauthorized campsites or push the transient population into the surrounding communities. Cleaning up these camps poses health and safety issues for park staff and should be factored into the project's cost. State Parks may consider including local government and community organizations to help streamline services for displaced persons in development projects.

2.3.2.7 Flooding

The North Beach Campground is associated with a saltmarsh and wetland complex and is subject to seasonal flooding. The proposed North Beach Campground Facility Improvement Project (See Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 3.3.11) includes design elements to raise the project site to reduce flooding. Future development may also elevate the restrooms. The parks' Corporation Yard is within the floodplain of Meadow Creek and Oceano Lagoon and is subject to occasional seasonal flooding. The Corporation Yard Improvement Project (See Volume 1, Chapter 3, Section 3.3.8) incorporates design elements to improve drainage and stormwater management and reduce flooding.



2.3.2.8 Sea Level Rise

Existing policy regarding sea level rise is set out in the Department Operations Manual (DOM) chapter 0300, and a subsequent Departmental Notice (DN 2014-03) updating that chapter. The “Coastlines and Coastal Erosion Policy” (DOM 0307.3.2) and “Coastal Development and Siting Policy” (DOM 0307.3.2.1) emphasize the importance of maintaining natural coastal processes and provide criteria for evaluating the appropriateness of structural protection for developments. DN 2014-03 released in September 2014 requires that projects consider sea-level rise before development.

In recent years, the State of California has shown increasing leadership and urgency in addressing climate change, including sea-level rise. In 2015, Governor Brown issued an executive order for State agencies to plan for and manage the effects of sea-level rise. The Governor’s Office of Planning and Research and the California Natural Resources Agency subsequently released policy and technical guidance documents. The State Legislature has passed several pieces of related legislation. A December 2019 Legislative Analyst’s Office report emphasized the economic importance of early, proactive action to manage sea-level rise to reduce adaptation costs for taxpayers. Also, California’s people continue to indicate strong support for policies that protect California’s treasured coast and beaches. As shown by a 2019 survey by the Public Policy Institute of California, most Californians view the ocean and beaches’ condition to be very important for California’s future.

State Parks manages nearly a quarter of California’s coastline. With 128 coastal park units, including those at Oceano Dunes District, providing coastal access and recreational opportunities to over 50 million people from all over the world, State Parks has an obligation and a chance to play a leading role in building California’s resilience to sea-level rise and coastal hazards. Many coastal parks are already experiencing impacts to resources, facilities, and public access from severe erosion and flooding related to sea-level rise. Sea level rise and associated events may be disastrous to State Parks’ coastal resources and public access if no further action is taken to prepare for and respond to this emerging threat.

Driven by these considerations, State Parks formed an internal multi-disciplinary Sea Level Rise Working Group in May 2018 to develop a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Strategy. The strategy articulates State Parks’ approach to coastal management in an era of sea-level rise and recommends actions and tools to build sea level rise considerations into existing planning and project development processes. The strategy considers the most recent science, guidance, and adaptation approaches taken by agencies, municipalities, and organizations across California.

State Parks will release an update to the strategy in early 2021.

All PWP Development Projects in the PWP have been reviewed under the strategy to address, adapt, and combat potential sea-level rise effects before implementation.

Figure 2-2 below shows a projected sea-level rise of 55 inches (1.4 meters) and its effects on Pismo State Beach and Oceano Dunes SVRA, including the PWP Development Projects.



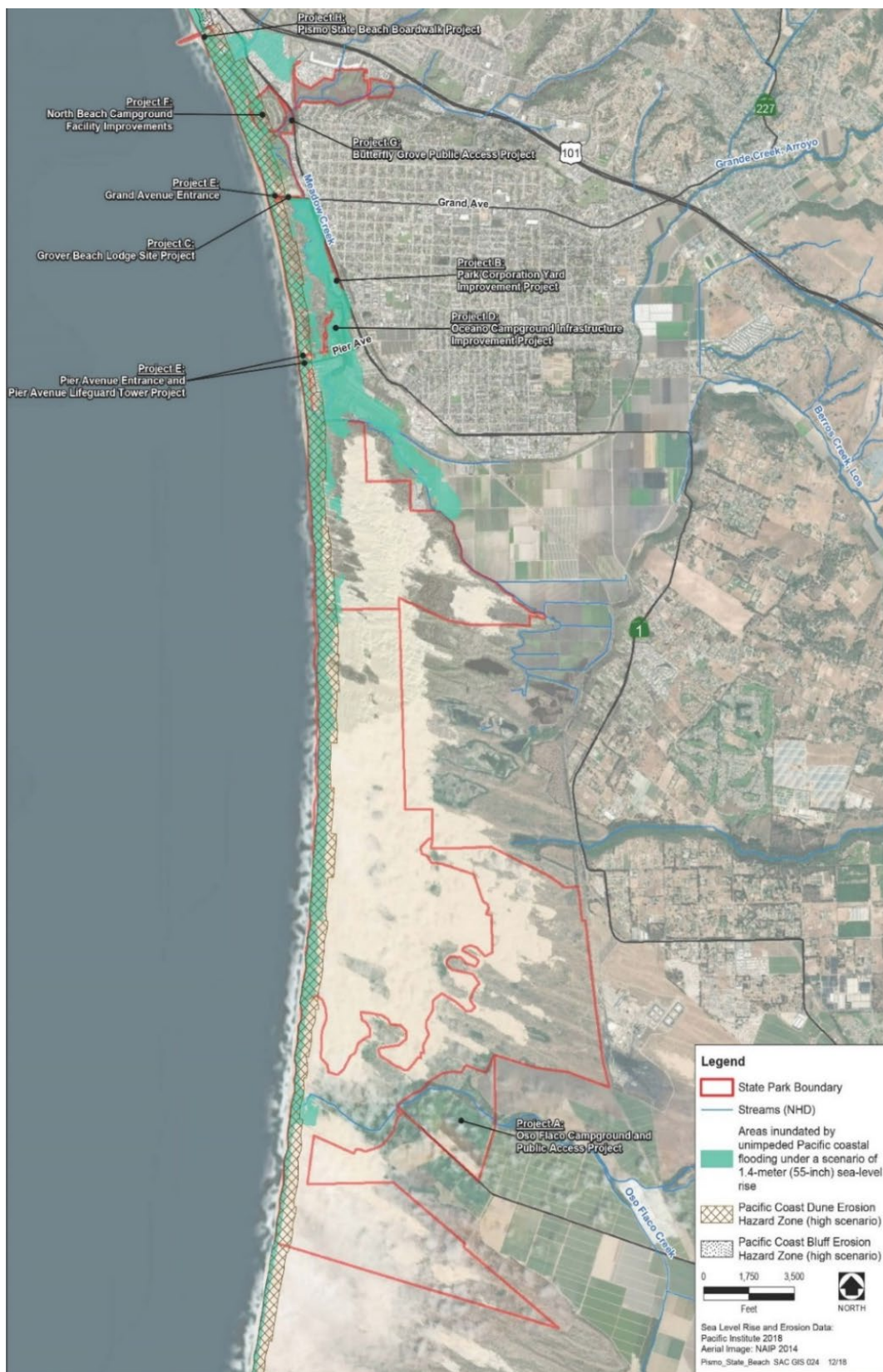


Figure 2-2. Sea Level Rise and Erosion Data

Source: Pacific Institute 2018



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