



Staff Recommendation

June 16, 2026

Item 4a

Action Item:

Consideration and Approval of Disbursement of Funds for Track 1 of the Senate Bill 1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant Program

Megan Williams, Coastal Resilience Program Manager

Recommended Action: Authorization to disburse up to \$1,571,592 to various grantees who submitted successful applications to the Senate Bill 1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant Program (SB 1 Grant Program) for sea level rise adaptation planning projects, as follows:

- 4a.1 Up to \$729,911 to the County of Sonoma/Permit Sonoma for the “Sonoma County Pacific Coast Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan”
- 4a.2 Up to \$291,681 to the County of Santa Barbara for the “Santa Barbara County Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan”
- 4a.3 Up to \$550,000 to the City of Goleta for “Climate Ready Goleta: Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis & Adaptation Plan”

Location: Statewide

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives: Goal 1: Build Resilience to Climate Change; Objective 1.1: Protect communities and ecosystems from the impacts of sea level rise, coastal storms, erosion, and flooding

Equity and Environmental Justice Benefits:

The SB 1 Grant Program meets many of the strategies and actions outlined in Goal 1 of OPC’s [Equity Plan](#), which is to establish and implement more equitable and sustainable community engagement and funding methods to expand and enhance opportunities for ocean and coastal projects, policies, and research. According to the [Sea Level Rise Adaptation Criteria](#), each project, regardless of phase, must include outreach, education, and community engagement, especially to environmental justice (EJ) communities and tribes, as part of the project’s scope. Equity and EJ

benefits include community engagement to inform locally driven adaptation priorities, improved coastal habitats, and safer coastal access.

Findings and Resolution:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibit(s), OPC hereby finds that:

1. The proposed projects are consistent with the purposes of Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, the California Ocean Protection Act;
2. The proposed projects are consistent with the Budget Act of 2022, which included a \$37.5 million Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund appropriation for implementation of the California Sea Level Rise Mitigation and Adaptation Act of 2021 (Chapter 236 of the Statutes of 2021; SB 1), and with Proposition 4, Public Resources Code Section 92000, which provides \$75 million to implement SB 1; and
3. The proposed projects are not ‘legal projects’ that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21068 and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations section 15378.”

Staff further recommends that OPC adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 35500 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

“OPC hereby approves the authorization to disburse up to \$1,571,592 to various grantees who submitted successful applications to the Senate Bill 1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant Program for sea level rise adaptation planning projects, as follows:

- Up to \$729,911 to the County of Sonoma
- Up to \$291,681 to the County of Santa Barbara
- Up to \$550,000 to the City of Goleta

This authorization is subject to the condition that prior to disbursement of funds, each grantee shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director of the OPC detailed work plans, schedules, staff requirements, budgets, and the names of any contractors intended to be used to complete the projects, as well as discrete deliverables that can be produced in intervals to ensure the projects are on target for successful completion. All projects will be developed under a shared understanding of process, management, and delivery.”

Executive Summary:

In August 2023, OPC approved the disbursement of up to \$95.9 million for the SB 1 Grant Program to fund sea level rise adaptation planning and implementation projects. The SB 1 Grant Program implements [Senate Bill 1 \(Atkins, 2021\)](#) and also supports local governments in meeting the requirements of [Senate Bill 272 \(Laird, 2023\)](#), which requires all coastal local governments to adopt sea level rise plans by 2034, integrated into Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) or San Francisco Bay Subregional Shoreline Adaptation Plans (SSAPs).

Staff recommend that OPC approve the disbursement of up to \$1,571,592 to fund three sea level rise adaptation planning projects submitted by local governments that successfully met the requirements of the SB 1 Grant Program. These projects will support locally led adaptation planning efforts and compliance with state planning requirements.

Background:

The SB 1 Grant Program offers three funding tracks: Track 1 for sea level rise adaptation planning, Track 2 for adaptation project implementation, and the Tribal Cultural Resources Funding Program, which provides dedicated support for California Native American tribes to assess and plan for sea level rise impacts to cultural resources and ancestral lands. Track 1 opened for proposal submission in December 2023 and continues to accept proposals on a non-competitive, rolling, quarterly basis, provided proposals satisfy program requirements.

To date, OPC has approved approximately \$31.1 million in Track 1 funding across 35 projects statewide (view an interactive map of awarded projects on the [SB 1 Grant Program webpage](#)), supporting local governments, regional agencies, and tribes in advancing sea level rise vulnerability assessments, adaptation plans, and related planning activities. Following the recommendations included in this ninth round of Track 1 funding, approximately \$11.2 million in current SB 1 Grant Program funding would remain for future planning and implementation efforts through a combination of remaining Budget Act of 2022 funds and Proposition 4 (2024) funds allocated to the program. Proposition 4 directs a total of \$75 million to OPC for implementation of the SB 1 Grant Program. OPC has thus far received \$20 million of Proposition 4 funds for projects, and additional allocations are anticipated of the remaining Proposition 4 funds in future budget years.

In this ninth round of Track 1 funding, OPC received four proposals requesting a total of approximately \$3.2 million. All proposals were reviewed by OPC staff in coordination with either California Coastal Commission (CCC) or San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) staff, depending on project location. Proposals were reviewed for consistency with the [Sea Level Rise Adaptation Criteria](#) and the evaluation criteria set forth in the solicitation.

One proposal was not recommended for funding because OPC staff determined that the proposed project did not sufficiently align with the intent and eligibility requirements of Track 1 of the SB 1 Grant Program.

Together, the three recommended projects will advance science-based and regionally coordinated sea level rise adaptation planning across California’s coast – ensuring that coastal communities have the technical foundation and locally driven strategies needed to build resilience to sea level rise by 2034, consistent with SB 1 (2021, Atkins) and SB 272 (2023, Laird).

Track 1 (Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning) Project Summaries:

4a.1 Sonoma County Pacific Coast Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan

Project Summary:

Sonoma County, through the County permitting and planning department Permit Sonoma, will develop the Sonoma County Pacific Coast Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan to evaluate and address sea level rise and related coastal hazards along more than 55 miles of Sonoma County’s outer coast, from the Gualala River to the Estero Americano. Building on the County’s recently certified Local Coastal Program, the project will update and expand Sonoma County’s sea level rise analysis to address current state guidance, evolving coastal hazards, and remaining planning gaps along the County’s outer coast. The project will update the County’s vulnerability assessment using best available science and current state guidance, including evaluation of coastal flooding, bluff retreat, erosion, and water supply vulnerabilities, and will develop a phased adaptation plan identifying subarea-specific adaptation strategies, implementation pathways, prioritized projects, and draft Local Coastal Program policy recommendations to support future SB 272 compliance efforts.

Sonoma County will conduct targeted community and tribal engagement throughout the project informed by the County’s Environmental Justice Element and prior coastal planning efforts. Together with OPC’s prior SB 1 investment supporting Sonoma County and the City of Petaluma’s San Pablo Bay shoreline adaptation planning efforts (OPC Meeting December 2025, [Item 6b.4](#)), this project expands regional adaptation planning efforts to Sonoma County’s outer coast and advances a coordinated countywide approach to long-term coastal resilience.

Equity and Environmental Justice Benefits:

The project will prioritize engagement with disadvantaged and environmental justice communities along Sonoma County’s outer coast identified through Sonoma County’s Environmental Justice Element, CalEnviroScreen, Census indicators, and the County’s 2024 Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, including rural coastal communities such as Jenner and Cazadero. These communities

face increasing risks from coastal flooding, bluff retreat, roadway disruptions, and threats to water systems and emergency access along the County’s outer coast, where Highway 1 serves as a critical transportation and evacuation corridor.

Outreach will prioritize participation from historically underserved coastal residents, including low-income households, older adults, renters, limited-English households, and residents of remote communities. Engagement will include in-person meetings in remote coastal areas, multilingual and accessible outreach materials, webinars, and coordination with Tribes, community-based organizations, and coastal stakeholders. The County will also coordinate with the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria to identify opportunities for alignment and information sharing, where appropriate, with the Tribe’s recently awarded SB 1-funded sea level rise planning effort (OPC Meeting March 2026, [Item 5b.3](#)). Community input will help inform adaptation priorities and actions intended to maintain safe coastal access, strengthen resilience of coastal-dependent communities and infrastructure, and support long-term protection of public resources and local livelihoods.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two years.

Project Financing:

Staff recommend that OPC authorize disbursement of up to \$729,911 to the County of Sonoma for the Sonoma County Pacific Coast Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan.

4a.2 Santa Barbara County Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan

Project Summary:

Santa Barbara County will develop the Santa Barbara County Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan to identify and prioritize adaptation strategies addressing sea level rise and related coastal hazards along the County’s unincorporated coastline. Building on the County’s previously completed sea level rise and climate vulnerability assessments and its ongoing Multi-Hazard Adaptation Plan effort, the project will develop a stand-alone sea level rise adaptation plan focused on phased adaptation pathways, implementation strategies, financing approaches, and prioritized actions to support long-term coastal resilience and future sea level rise planning efforts. The project will evaluate adaptation approaches addressing sea level rise, coastal flooding, bluff and dune erosion, and impacts to coastal access, infrastructure, ecosystems, and housing, while emphasizing nature-based solutions and a full range of adaptation approaches consistent with Coastal Act policies.

The project will also expand and refine coastal-focused community engagement already underway through the County’s Multi-Hazard Adaptation Plan process, including engagement with environmental justice communities, tribes, community-based organizations, and coastal stakeholders. The project builds on Santa Barbara County’s ongoing regional coastal resilience coordination efforts, including the County Coastal Hazards and Adaptation Interagency Committee, and is intended to position the County to advance implementation-ready coastal adaptation actions and future sea level rise planning efforts.

Equity and Environmental Justice Benefits:

The project includes targeted engagement with environmental justice communities identified through Santa Barbara County’s recently adopted [Environmental Justice Element](#) and related climate vulnerability assessments, including Isla Vista and other frontline communities vulnerable to coastal hazards. Isla Vista faces ongoing bluff erosion and coastal access impacts that threaten infrastructure, public safety, and housing within an already constrained rental market. The project will also consider the importance of County beaches, parks, and coastal resources for rural, inland, and lower-income communities that rely on these areas for recreation and public access.

Engagement activities will include community workshops, multilingual outreach and interpretation services, online engagement tools, and coordination with tribes, community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and coastal stakeholders to help inform adaptation priorities and implementation approaches. The County also plans to conduct targeted outreach through trusted community networks serving underrepresented communities and tailored tribal engagement with Chumash tribal representatives.

Through expanded engagement and cross-jurisdictional coordination, the project will help ensure future adaptation strategies reflect community priorities, improve long-term resilience, and support equitable access to public infrastructure and coastal resources.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two years.

Project Financing:

Staff recommend that OPC authorize disbursement of up to \$291,681 to the County of Santa Barbara for the Santa Barbara County Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan.

4a.3 Climate Ready Goleta: Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis & Adaptation Plan

Project Summary:

The City of Goleta proposes to develop a sea level rise Vulnerability Analysis and Adaptation Plan to evaluate and address sea level rise and related coastal hazards along the City’s coastline and interconnected slough systems. The project area includes low-lying neighborhoods, estuarine systems, beaches, dunes, public accessways, and infrastructure vulnerable to coastal flooding, erosion, storm impacts, and compound flooding associated with sea level rise. Building on the City’s 2015 Coastal Hazards Vulnerability Assessment, ongoing Local Coastal Program development process, and existing regional planning efforts, the project will update and refine the City’s understanding of coastal flood risk and develop a phased adaptation plan identifying prioritized adaptation strategies, implementation pathways, financing approaches, and adaptation triggers to support long-term coastal resilience and future implementation efforts. The project will also coordinate with regional partners, including the Goleta Slough Management Committee and the Santa Barbara Climate Collaborative’s Coastal Hazards and Adaptation Committee, to support consistency across interconnected coastal systems and ongoing regional adaptation efforts.

In partnership with the UC Santa Cruz Center for Coastal Climate Resilience, the project will also utilize Coastal Storm Modeling System (CoSMoS)-Adapt modeling tools to evaluate the effectiveness of potential adaptation strategies within the interconnected coastal-slough system and help inform development of community-preferred adaptation pathways.

Together with the City’s ongoing Local Coastal Program development process, the project is intended to position the City to pursue a future Local Coastal Program amendment incorporating updated sea level rise policies and adaptation strategies to support future SB 272 compliance.

Equity and Environmental Justice Benefits:

Old Town Goleta, a disadvantaged community identified through [CalEnviroScreen 4.0](#), faces disproportionate vulnerability to flooding and compound coastal hazards associated with sea level rise, storm events, and groundwater inundation. The neighborhood includes a high proportion of renters and housing-burdened households with lower adaptive capacity to climate impacts, and recent storm events have demonstrated the area’s vulnerability to flooding impacts along low-lying roads and neighborhoods.

The project includes robust community engagement designed to ensure meaningful participation from residents most vulnerable to coastal hazards, including multilingual outreach and interpretation services, community workshops, surveys, and a coastal “walk and talk” event focused on local flooding and adaptation priorities. The City will coordinate with local Chumash

tribal representatives, community-based organizations, and coastal stakeholders throughout development of the vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan. Tribal representatives will also have opportunities to participate in the Climate Ready Goleta working group, supported through dedicated tribal engagement stipends.

The resulting adaptation plan will help guide equitable long-term resilience efforts addressing risks to neighborhoods, public infrastructure, coastal access, habitat areas, and community assets vulnerable to sea level rise and compound flooding hazards.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two years.

Project Financing:

Staff recommend that OPC authorize disbursement of up to \$550,000 to the City of Goleta for Climate Ready Goleta: Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis & Adaptation Plan.

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to \$1,571,592 to the following:

Recommended SB 1 Grant Program Projects: Track 1 (Planning)	OPC
4a.1 County of Sonoma	\$729,911
4a.2 County of Santa Barbara	\$291,681
4a.3 City of Goleta	\$550,000
TOTAL	\$1,571,592

The anticipated source of funds will be from the Budget Act of 2022, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund appropriation (Fiscal Year 2022/2023) to OPC for implementation of the California Sea Level

Rise Mitigation and Adaptation Act of 2021, enacted under Chapter 236 of Statutes of 2021 (SB 1, Atkins), and from the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4), Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Proposition 4, Public Resources Code Section 92000 directs a total of \$75 million to OPC to implement SB 1.

Pursuant to SB 1, funding is designated “for the purpose of making grants to local and regional governments to update local and regional land use plans to take into account sea level rise and for directly related investments to implement those plans.” Consequently, all projects under the SB 1 Grant Program will focus on sea level rise adaptation and fall within the pre-planning, planning, or implementation project phases. These projects will follow the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Criteria, developed in accordance with SB 1 and in consultation with the Sea Level Rise State and Regional Support Collaborative.

Consistency with California Ocean Protection Act:

The proposed projects are consistent with the Ocean Protection Act, Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, because these projects are consistent with trust-fund allowable projects, defined in Public Resources Code Section 35650(b)(2) as projects which:

- Eliminate or reduce threats to coastal and ocean ecosystems, habitats, and species.
- Allow for increased public access to, and enjoyment of, ocean and coastal resources, consistent with sustainable, long-term protection and conservation of those resources.
- Improve management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems.
- Provide funding for adaptive management, planning coordination, monitoring, research, and other necessary activities to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change on California's ocean ecosystem.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

The various proposed projects are not ‘legal projects’ that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21068 and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations section 15378. If a project were determined to be a ‘legal project’ under CEQA, the proposed projects are statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to 14 Cal. Code of Regulations section 15262 as feasibility and planning studies.