



Offshore Oil Drilling Companies, New Kinds of Ocean Energy: Even the emergence of so-called "clean energy" proposals affecting our coast will need careful scrutiny. Photo: pixabay.com Free for commercial use - No attribution required

The Imminent Threat to our COAST and the Importance of Updating The Local Coastal Plan (LCP) PART 2

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Nov 30, 2019

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[Please READ Part 1 in the print version November Gazette and [ONLINE @ SonomaCountyGazette.com](https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/sonoma-county-news/responding-to-current-threats-to-the-sonoma-coast-part-1)]. (<https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/sonoma-county-news/responding-to-current-threats-to-the-sonoma-coast-part-1>)

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The Public and the LCP: The Sonoma Coast is an irreplaceable public asset and deserves the kind of respect and due process that it was accorded during the thorough public participation by which the first LCP was initially formulated and adopted. After a County-requested pause in the LCP update process following the 2017 Tubbs fire, **Permit Sonoma is now pushing through an artificially-rushed public review of hundreds of pages of binding planning guidance and formal regulatory language in the aftermath of this year's new fire season.** How the updated LCP is to be reformulated at this time will determine, more than any other single County policy, the future fate of our coastal environment.

There is a lot at stake here right now. The inspiration our coast provides to each of us compels us to defend it. The health and well-being of our communities requires our participation at this critical time.



President Trump's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is putting forth a plan of spreading 1.5 tons of second-generation rodenticide poison pellets into a National Wildlife Refuge on the Southeast Farallon Island.

A Bizarre Helicopter Poisoning Proposal in the Midst of Our National Marine Sanctuary:

Defending what we have already protected is a recurring theme at this time on our coast. Right in the middle of **the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary** itself, President Trump's **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** is trying to falsely claim that their agency can somehow help to mitigate the impacts of climate warming by using helicopters to spread 1.5 tons of second-generation rodenticide poison pellets into a **National Wildlife Refuge** on the Southeast Farallon Island, resulting in uncounted "bykill" of a host of non-target species.

Under this plan, the Fish and Wildlife Service claims it can thereby dissuade about eight burrowing owls from the Marin Headlands from undertaking their annual avian migration out to the island each fall to consume their share of an overpopulation of house mice derived from some escaped mice that were accidentally introduced there during the Gold Rush. These visiting burrowing owls, it is claimed, tend to stick around after the rapid collapse of the mouse population each year and then predate on the eggs and chicks of a small seabird called the Ashy Storm Petrel.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, when asked in a separate petition to list the Ashy Storm Petrel under the Endangered Species Act, asserted in response that the bird's population has been increasing and the agency has thereby twice denied the request for any elevated protective listing.

On July 10, 2019, the California Coastal Commission, which must approve this "poison drop" proposal, asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff who were presenting this plan in a public hearing to answer some important questions for which they simply had no response. Lacking the ability to react coherently to key questions posed by the Coastal Commissioners, the Fish and Wildlife Service federal staffers then temporarily withdrew their poison plan from consideration, but this same scheme will be back to again seek approval at a future Coastal Commission meeting coming up soon.

Those of us who care about our National Marine Sanctuary will need to once again defend this coast from Trump's fake science by attending one of these meetings. Meanwhile, you can quickly customize and send your own letter to the Coastal Commission to share your comments on this idea by visiting <http://PoisonFreeSanctuary.org>

The Incredible Story of Scotty Creek and the Massive Sonoma Coast "Bridge to Nowhere": And finally, also indirectly affected by what is likely going to eventually be adopted by our Board of Supervisors in the updated Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan, is the long-controversial proposal by Caltrans to construct an oversized elevated urban-freeway-style concrete bridge to span little Scotty Creek on Highway One just north of Sereno del Mar at Gleason Beach. The LCP is supposed to preserve the visual values – the spectacular optics – of our coast, viewsheds that have been well-protected to date within what are known as "Scenic Landscape Units", or SLU's, as part of the original LCP.

One of the few remaining largely-undeveloped rural SLU shoreline segments is the Scotty Creek/Gleason Beach watershed, where Caltrans is planning to construct their three-quarter-mile long highway realignment project, including a proposed oversized bridge to cross little ten-foot-wide Scotty Creek, a concrete bridge that would become the largest manmade object on the Sonoma Coast. The County of Sonoma should not simply duck their responsibility to play a duly-designated role in pending decisions that will eradicate the viewsheds and coastal values at this location to Caltrans or any other agency. The updated LCP needs to be reconfigured to actually accomplish what it is supposed to do, protect our coast. Once completed, the updated LCP will likely determine the ultimate fate of this fragile Scotty Creek “Scenic Landscape Unit” (SLU) for all time.

Same Offshore Oil Drilling Companies, New Kinds of Ocean Energy: Even the emergence of so-called “clean energy” proposals affecting our coast will need careful scrutiny. Unfounded claims that certain favored industrial megaprojects will help fix the global climate crisis can be deceptive and require careful scrutiny in the context of sound science and long-term ecosystem health. We need to be particularly cautious about analyzing some of the transparent attempts at the “climate-washing” of emerging issues, lest the resulting hasty decisions become deliberately obscured by the wrong kind of “science”. Not every idea that asserts it will fix the climate is necessarily a good idea.

To our north and to our south, massive floating offshore wind turbine arrays are being proposed by the U.S. Department of Interior off of Morro Bay and Big Sur, and nearshore off of Eureka and along the Humboldt County Coast. Many of California’s big offshore wind energy projects would be built by petroleum companies like Equinor (until recently known as Statoil) in a hospitable federal regulatory context where the prospective corporate bidders, the seafloor mapping, and the entire supply chain for the giant wind generator arrays is part of the manufacturing base and the multinational infrastructure that primarily serves the offshore oil and gas drilling industry. A massive undersea power cable extending all the way down our coastline from Humboldt County to San Francisco appears to be part of this offshore wind energy buildout scenario. We will need to determine how the proposed mesh of a multitude of huge anchoring cables, the complex infrastructure of power transmission wires, the dozens of tall steel towers, and the other associated industrial impacts will impact whale migration patterns, our seabird populations, and access to our traditional fishing grounds before these projects are permanently greenlighted.

The agendas for the **Public Review Draft workshops** are now available within the online calendar events.

The workshops will each include a staff presentation on the draft and time dedicated to discussion and taking public input. The Staff presentation provided at The Sea Ranch on November 17, 2019 (PDF) is available for reference.

Next Public Workshop:

Bodega Bay December 14, 2019 10 AM -12 PM

Bodega Bay Fire Station 510 State Hwy 1 Bodega Bay

Meeting Structure

Welcome Staff Presentation (30 Minutes)

Project timeline and process

What is a Local Coastal Plan?

Purpose of the Local Coastal Plan Update

2015 Preliminary Draft - Review

Public Review Draft Public Comment/Questions (60 Minutes)

Closing Statements (10 Minutes)

Recap and next steps

Posting of Public Comment:

As requested we are currently developing a location on the project webpage for posting of public comment and summary notes. An additional notice will be sent when public comments are available for review.

Sincerely, Cecily Condon Planner III

PRMD-LCP-Update@sonoma-county.org (<mailto:PRMD-LCP-Update@sonoma-county.org>)

sonomacounty.ca.gov/LCP-Update (<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Long-Range-Plans/Local-Coastal-Program/Proposed/>)

Comments:



Nov 30, 2019

“Exeter University announced today they have determined that coastal encroachment due to climate change is now inevitable and cannot be stopped. Even if we stopped using fossil fuels today the rise in ocean levels would still occur - it will just take longer than if we continue producing greenhouse gases as we are today. Exeter scientists say we should expect a minimum of 30' rise in ocean levels by 2040. If we don't build seawalls the existing structures along coast lines will be inundated and most certainly will pollute the oceans as they decompose in the salt water of the oceans. Based on the data provided by Exeter, it appears clear we should begin demolishing and properly recycling all structures and construction materials within the inundation zones while rebuilding our global societies and infrastructures further inland in anticipation of rising sea levels. This remedy will allow us to continue to burn fossil fuels as an resistance against the scheduled ice age which has been abated by our greenhouse gases. And don't forget the demolish/reconstruction action will create endless jobs for people across the globe and maybe even bring cultures and societies together in a quest for surviving climate change.”

- Beef Mcwin

LOGIN TO MAKE A COMMENT 

[_ \(https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/login/index.html?rtn=/sonoma-county-news/part-2-threat-to-our-coast-updating-the-local-coastal-plan\)](https://www.sonomacountygazette.com/login/index.html?rtn=/sonoma-county-news/part-2-threat-to-our-coast-updating-the-local-coastal-plan)

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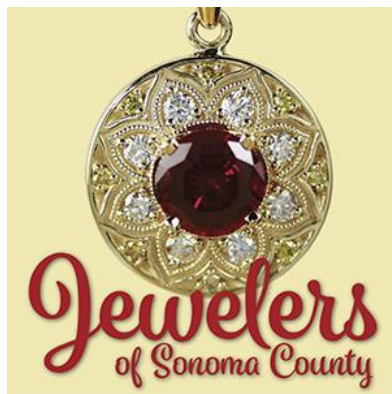
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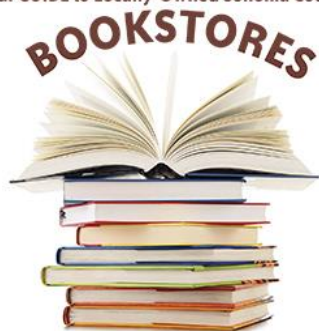
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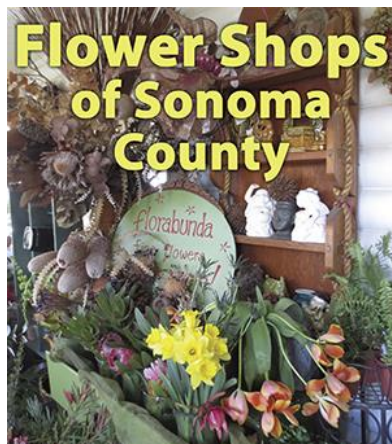
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