

FAQs

What is the Santa Cruz County Local Coastal Program (LCP)?

The County of Santa Cruz plays an essential role in coastal management, in partnership with state agencies with a shared stewardship responsibility to protect and enhance coastal resources. The Coastal Act requires that local governments develop Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) (consisting of Land Use Plans and Implementing ordinances) to carry out policies of the California Coastal Act at the local level. Once certified by the Coastal Commission as consistent with and adequate to carry out the Coastal Act, responsibility for issuance of most Coastal Development Permits under the certified LCP is delegated to the local government. The Commission retains some continuing permit and appeal jurisdiction following LCP certification, and responsibility to certify any amendments to the LCP.

How does the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project address climate change and coastal risks?

The Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project proactively addresses coastal risks by implementing strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise and erosion. This project includes identifying high-risk areas, promoting sustainable development practices, and enhancing community resilience through collaborative planning and proactive adaptation measures. The program aims to create a safer and more sustainable coastline for current and future generations.

Will the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment affect my property?

The assessment itself will not impose new regulations or change property ownership. However, it will provide valuable insights into how rising sea levels could impact properties along the coastline, highlighting areas vulnerable to flooding and erosion. Findings from the assessment will guide future planning and LCP updates, potentially influencing development decisions and helping homeowners make informed choices regarding property maintenance, insurance, and investments. The assessment's overarching objective is to collaborate with our community members to promote sustainable growth and climate change resilience by identifying how our coastal neighborhoods may be at risk during sea level rise.

During the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project we continue to process permits for home building and remodeling projects on coastal bluffs and beaches,

applying existing codes and policies to those projects. The Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project is not influencing or affecting in any way existing applications for permits.

What is the plan for addressing community concerns and dissenting opinions?

Community engagement is crucial to the success of the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project. We are committed to ensuring that all voices are heard and that community concerns and dissenting opinions are actively considered throughout this project.

To address concerns and questions, we'll have an extensive outreach plan that consists of the following:

- **Workshops and public meetings:** We will hold a number of public meetings to give updates on the assessment, present findings, and get community input. Community members will be able to directly ask questions and learn more in these forums.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** We will communicate with local stakeholders such as business associations, homeowners' associations, environmental organizations, and the public to better understand differing viewpoints and get feedback on the assessment's conclusions and suggestions.
- **Multiple communication channels:** We will maintain open lines of communication through our website, social media, and newsletters.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Throughout the assessment process, we will set up channels for community members to voice their thoughts and questions. You can share your thoughts or questions by emailing:
sealevelriseproject@santacruzcountyca.gov

Will this assessment affect beach access or recreation?

The Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project will not directly impose changes to beach access or recreational activities, but it will provide valuable information that will guide future planning and management of these community resources.

What is the timeline for implementing any recommendations from the assessment?

The timeline for implementing recommendations from the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project will depend on several factors, including the complexity of the proposed strategies, available funding, and community input. Recommendations from the assessment will guide long-term policy planning.

How will this assessment affect future development permits along the coastline?

While the assessment will not dictate specific permit approvals or denials, it will serve as a tool for understanding the potential risks associated with coastal development in light of rising sea levels. By understanding and addressing the risks, we can ensure all developments are designed to be sustainable, protecting long-term investments for generations to come. Findings from the assessment will guide future planning and LCP updates, potentially influencing development decisions and helping homeowners make informed choices regarding property maintenance, insurance, and investments

How can community members get involved and/or stay involved in the Sea Level Rise Assessment Project?

Community involvement is essential to the success of the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Project. Residents, businesses, and stakeholders can participate in upcoming public workshops, provide feedback during meetings, and submit comments through our public comment form. Additionally, individuals can subscribe to our newsletter to receive the latest updates and information on how to engage with the program. Your voice can shape the future of our coastline.