

Draft letter to TWIC concerning Sea Level Rise – 8/20/21

August 26, 2021

Supervisor Candace Andersen, District 2, Chair
Supervisor Diane Burgis, District 3
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee
1025 Escobar Street
Martinez, CA 94553

Dear Supervisors Andersen and Burgis:

On behalf of the Hazardous Materials Commission, and at your request, I am writing to provide you with specific recommendations on steps you should take to address the potential impacts of sea level rise on the storage, use and transportation of hazardous materials and hazardous waste in Contra Costa County. The Commission acknowledges that their mission is to advise the Board of Supervisor only about policies related to hazardous materials and hazardous waste, but that as it pertains to the potential impacts of sea level rise, these recommendations will address a broader scope of impacts by necessity.

The Commission hopes you will begin to implement these steps immediately. The Commission also recognizes that revisions to County's General Plan and Climate Action Plan are underway and will be completed in the next couple of years, and are going to include comprehensive goals, policies and actions addressing sea level rise. Therefore, you also have the option of waiting and incorporating these recommendations into the updates of the General Plan and the Climate Action Plan.

Background

The Hazardous Materials Commission first wrote a letter to the Board of Supervisors concerning sea level rise on January 26, 2017 encouraging them to take action in response to the recommendations of the Adapting to Rising Tides study that was completed for most of the Contra Costa County shoreline by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission in 2016. Subsequent to that report, another Adapting to Rising Tides study was completed by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission in 2019 for the Eastern-most shoreline area of the County not addressed in the first study. Also in 2019, a Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study was completed for the Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Programs. These studies laid out potential health and environmental impacts from Sea Level Rise to Contra Costa County, and potential adaptation measures that could be taken to address these potential impacts.

The Hazardous Materials Commission received a presentation on the Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study in 2019. This study was also presented to the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee (TWIC) in December, 2020. In response to the findings of this study,

the Hazardous Materials Commission wrote a letter to TWIC on February 26, 2021 encouraging them to take further action to address the potential impacts of sea level rise. The Commission's letter was discussed at the April 12, 2021 TWIC meeting. TWIC directed the Hazardous Materials Commission to return at a future meeting with specific recommendations on how to proceed.

On June 8, 2021 Supervisor Burgis and County Administrator Monica Nino wrote a letter to County Department Directors requesting them to work with the Hazardous Materials Commission by providing any data and any preliminary reports they related to sea level rise. Since that time, Michael Kent, Executive Assistant to the Hazardous Materials Commission, has been interviewing staff in the Public Works, Conservation and Development, Sheriff and Health Departments about how they address sea level rise in their planning, policies and actions. He has also interviewed staff in other agencies such as the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority. A summary of his findings is attached. The Hazardous Materials Commission is also conducting a survey of businesses that handle hazardous materials that will potentially be impacted by sea level rise as to what actions they are taking to address this potential threat.

Recommendations

The Hazardous Materials Commission recommends TWIC take the following specific actions to address the potential impacts of Sea Level Rise on the storage, use and transportation of hazardous materials and hazardous waste in Contra Costa County.

- 1) Support funding adequate County staff to plan, secure grant funding for, coordinate and implement the measures needed to address the potential impacts of sea level rise in the County.
- 2) Direct County staff to establish benchmarks to determine when to take specific actions to address the impacts of sea level rise.
- 3) Direct the Public Works, Conservation and Development and Health Departments to ensure that accounting for the impacts of sea level rise is incorporated into all of their relevant policies and practices and actions, and that they analyze the potential impacts of sea level rise on the infrastructure and functions for which they are currently responsible.
- 4) Direct County Staff to coordinate, and plan with other stakeholders in the County, a summit to begin establishing a county-wide effort to address the potential impacts of sea level rise.
- 5) Review the current and future updates of the County's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and the County's Capital Road Improvement and Preservation Program (CRIPP) to ensure they are consistent with the updates currently being made to the County's General Plan and the Climate Action Plan in regards to measures addressing the impacts of sea level rise.

- 6) Direct the Public Works and Conservation and Development Departments to analyze the potential impacts to the “Pinch Points” identified in the Commodity Flow study commissioned by the Hazardous Materials Program, and develop, secure funding for, and implement measures to mitigate these impacts.
- 7) Designate a County Department, or someone within a County Department, to compile and track the activities of all County Departments related to addressing the potential impacts of sea level rise, and make sure this information accessible to the public.
- 8) Direct the County Administrator to prioritize the efforts of County Departments to address the potential impacts of sea level rise in their oversight of County Departments.

I hope you will give these recommendations your full consideration. Please direct any questions concerning these recommendations to Michael Kent, Executive Assistant to the Hazardous Materials Commission at (925) 250-3227.

Sincerely,

Fred Glueck, Hazardous Materials Commission Chairperson