



January 6, 2023

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

Fifty years ago, Congress passed the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA). In doing so, they established an unprecedented, and not-since-repeated, partnership between federal agencies and the states. The CZMA authorized state Coastal Zone Management Programs to advance the protection, conservation, responsible use, and sustainable economic development of the coastline. It also established the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) to protect estuaries, study how they are changing, support coastal communities, and inform coastal management decisions. Half a century later, these partnerships thrive and are embodied in California's three coastal zone management programs—the California Coastal Commission (CCC), the Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy), and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) – and the San Francisco, Elkhorn Slough, and Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserves.

On this 50th anniversary of the CZMA, we want to thank you for your commitment to effective coastal management and congratulate CCC, the Conservancy, BCDC and the San Francisco, Elkhorn Slough, and Tijuana River NERRS for their valuable contributions to our nation's ongoing commitment to the conservation and responsible use of our coastal zone.

California established its Coastal Zone Management Program in 1978; it is currently administered by three state agencies—the California Coastal Commission (CCC), the Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy), and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC). CCC, the Conservancy, and BCDC develops and implements California's coastal zone management plan and ensures any federal action in the coastal zone is consistent with the plan. Each Coastal Zone Management Program is unique, providing communities with tools to assess coastal vulnerability and inform decision-making, manage coastal and offshore infrastructure development, address water quality, and support public access to coastal areas. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), on behalf of the federal government, reviews and approves the plan and provides funding to the state, which is matched

well over 1:1 with state funds. In FY 2022, this amounted to \$3,054,000 in federal funding for California.

In 1979 the Elkhorn Slough Reserve—California’s first Reserve—was established and is a partnership between the California Department of Fish and Game and NOAA. In 1982, the Tijuana River Reserve was established as a partnership between the California State Parks and NOAA. And, since 2003, the San Francisco Bay Reserve has been a partnership between San Francisco State University and NOAA. The three Reserves meet the needs of California communities and businesses, while advancing the resilience of its coasts. It delivers science, education, training, and technical assistance that protects public health, supports food security, enhances water quality, sustains essential industries, and prepares the next generation of community leaders and scientists to meet the challenges of our changing coasts. As with the state coastal zone management plan, NOAA reviews the Reserves’ plans and provides funding to the NERRs with a state-federal match.

The Coastal States Organization (CSO) and the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association (NERRA) are proud to serve as the Washington, DC–based organizations that support these programs. We are honored to have CCC, the Conservancy, and BCDC and the San Francisco, Elkhorn Slough, and Tijuana River Reserves as representatives to our networks. Our role is to help our members—and therefore your state government and San Francisco State University—better navigate and leverage the federal policies and agencies, congressional actions, and funding decisions that impact their work.

As we look ahead to the next 50 years, the challenges facing our coasts are great. However, through the funding provided in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), we have an opportunity to transform our coasts to be more resilient and help communities to better balance the many uses of a modern working coastline. The BIL specifically directs \$207 million to Coastal Zone Management Programs and \$77 million to the NERRS over the next five years with no requirement for state match. It also allocates hundreds of millions of dollars to other coastal infrastructure funding opportunities. There is the potential for these programs to bring additional coastal resilience funding to California through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022, which included \$2.6 billion for NOAA to work on resilience and community engagement. Of these funds, CSO and NERRA have requested that NOAA provide \$207 million to Coastal Zone Management Programs and \$77 million to the NERRS—also without a state match requirement. This would go a long way toward ensuring that CCC, the Conservancy, and BCDC and the San Francisco, Elkhorn Slough, and Tijuana River Reserves can significantly advance the resilience of communities in California.

But this is just a start. As climate impacts intensify, coastal hazards increase, and coastal populations and demands on the coasts continue to grow, it is ever more critical that the California Coastal Commission, the Coastal Conservancy, the San Francisco Bay Conservation

and Development Commission and San Francisco, Elkhorn Slough, and Tijuana River Reserves have not only federal support, but also California leadership's support. CSO and NERRA look forward to working with you and these programs to ensure California has the resources needed to meet these challenges in the coming half century.

Kind regards,



Derek Brockbank
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Coastal States Organization



Rebecca K. Roth
Executive Director
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association

cc: Steve Relyea, Acting Chancellor, San Francisco State University