

NEWS

March 8, 2018

For Immediate Release

San Mateo County Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment Finalized

Larger Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan includes other climate change impacts

Redwood City — The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday will consider the finalized Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment, confirming the County's commitment to preparing and protecting its vulnerable communities.

At the March 13 meeting, the Board will hear a presentation on the assessment and an overview of the County's larger Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan. Both the assessment and action plan serve as tools to inform and guide the County and its cities in climate change preparedness and adaptation planning.

San Mateo County's location between the San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Coast makes it especially vulnerable to sea level rise, said Office of Sustainability Director Jim Eggemeyer.

The Office of Sustainability administers Sea Change SMC, the County's sea level rise initiative, and in June 2015 initiated a comprehensive assessment of flooding, erosion and sea level rise impacts on people, infrastructure and community functions. The assessment focuses on the entire eastern bayshore and along the western coast from Half Moon Bay north.

The assessment's key findings point to the need for:

- Both near- and long-term actions to protect the county's networked infrastructure which contains roads and highways, levees, electric substations, transmission towers, wastewater treatment plants and pump stations;
- Actions at multiple geographic scales focused on emergency preparedness, policy, plan and procedure updates, and shoreline and site-specific protection measures;
- Strategies to support residents' mental and physical health when sea levels rise and prevent post-flood health hazards and social and economic disruption;
- Coordinated and collaborative action across multiple jurisdictions.

The assessment not only evaluates the potential impacts but also suggests solutions to protect people and places. However, the work is far from done, said Board President Dave Pine who led two countywide convenings on sea level rise.

“This assessment is an important first step toward a coordinated effort throughout the county to prepare for sea level rise,” Pine said. “Every jurisdiction must understand its own areas of risk, but sea level rise crosses jurisdictional borders so we must work together to keep our communities safe.”

The Office of Sustainability via Sea Change SMC will expand its adaptation planning for sea level rise while simultaneously implementing an overall Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan. The plan will assess sea level rise vulnerability for the south coast of the county and major facilities while also identifying other climate change impacts. The plan will assess sea level rise vulnerability for the south coast of the county and major facilities while also identifying other climate change impacts, including heat, wildfire, storms and precipitation, at-risk transportation and communities and potential adaptation strategies.

“Understanding climate change risks is crucial in building a prepared and stronger county,” Eggemeyer said.

The Climate Change Preparedness Action Plan will raise awareness and build support for collaboration on climate change. The plan includes creating a menu of policies and strategies to integrate climate change adaptation into County and city planning and operations and partnering with cities to develop Community Resilience Plans for vulnerable communities.

View the complete Final Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment along with highlights and summary findings at <http://seachangesmc.com>

The Board of Supervisors meet Tuesday, March 13, 2018, in Board Chambers, 400 County Center, Redwood City. The complete Board agenda is available at <https://sanmateocounty.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

###