

MONTEREY COUNTY
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
 Erik V. Lundquist, AICP, Director



HOUSING, PLANNING, BUILDING, ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

1441 Schilling Place, South 2nd Floor
 Salinas, California 93901-4527

(831)755-5025
www.co.monterey.ca.us

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 28, 2022

To: Office of Supervisor Mary L. Adams, District 5

From: Shandy Carroll, Management Analyst III, HCD

Subject: Update to District 5 regarding Carmel Lagoon and Carmel River projects

cc: Melanie Beretti, Principal Planner

The following is an update regarding Projects and activities in the Carmel Lagoon and lower Carmel River area for the Monterey County Supervisorial District 5 office to share with constituents. It covers work completed between December 23, 2021, and March 22, 2022, and work planned for the near future. Prior updates can be found at <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/carmel-river-and-lagoon-project-updates>

1. Carmel Lagoon and River Beach Sandbar Seasonal Management Activities:

Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP) staff continue to monitor the Carmel Lagoon water level. Since the sandbar was mechanically managed in December, it has naturally opened and closed several times.

Below are key activities, status and updates related to sandbar management activities.

Project Component	Status	Update
Upcoming meetings	None planned	Staff attended CSA 1’s advisory committee meeting in February.
Interim (Seasonal) Sandbar Management	In progress: October - March	All necessary permits are complete and active, and can be viewed here: https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/current-major-projects/carmel-lagoon-ecosystem-protective-barrier-and-scenic-road-protective-barrier-systems
Temporary Flood Management	In progress	A pumping contractor hired by PWFP will be on hand if stormwater is backed up behind the sandbag wall at the end of the ends of Camino Real, River Park Place, and Monte Verde Streets. Sandbags will be removed at the end of the wet season, at the availability of contracted staff.

Monitoring	In progress – see links	Carmel Lagoon Water Levels Current and forecasted flow at Robles Del Rio Bridge, Carmel River Wave height at Carmel River Beach
------------	-------------------------	---

2. Carmel Lagoon Ecosystem Protective Barrier (EPB), Scenic Road Protection structure (SRPS) and Interim Sandbar Management Plan (ISMP) Project (REF 120051):

The 2016 Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Carmel Lagoon Ecosystem Protective Barrier (EPB), Scenic Road Protection structure (SRPS) and Interim Sandbar Management Plan (ISMP) Project is located at the below link: <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/current-major-projects/carmel-lagoon-ecosystem-protective-barrier-and-scenic-road-protective-barrier-systems>

Project Component	Status	Update
Upcoming Community meetings	Tentatively Planned: 5:30 pm May 19, 2022	A community outreach meeting to present an EIR update, and review of technical studies will be held in May 2022 to review the updated 30% SRPS Design plans. This meeting schedule will be finalized at the beginning of May, and the zoom meeting information will be sent via email and by notice in the Carmel Pine Cone and Monterey Weekly at that time.
Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	Draft revision	Final Technical studies on the natural location of the sandbar breach and the Carmel River Beach sediment transport have been added to the Draft EIR. Recirculation of the Draft EIR is expected in summer 2022.
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	Ongoing	Meeting held February 15 th with the TAC, and March 3 rd with the Agency and Stakeholder Advisory group to review the technical study ‘Impact of SRPS on Carmel River Beach’.
EIR Technical Studies	Final Drafts	Additional technical studies to analyze the hydrology from stormwater runoff inland of the sandbag wall has been added to the current EIR contract. The draft technical study evaluating the effect of the SRPS wall on the beach is under review with comments due March 30, 2022. The 30% Design for the SRPS draft is expected following review of comments on the SRPS impact on beach technical study.
SRPS 30% Design	Pending Technical Studies	Following the completion of the technical studies, the existing preliminary SRPS 30% design described in the Draft EIR will be updated to reflect the new information. The design will include the location, dimensions, type of wall, and will consider sea level rise and identify adaptive measures. A visual rendering of preliminary designs will be released with the re-circulated DEIR. All studies will be provided to the Technical Advisory Committee, regulatory

		agencies, stakeholders, and the community for review and input.
--	--	---

3. Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement (CRFREE) Project

The CRFREE Project Certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) is available at:

<https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/current-major-projects/carmel-river-free>

Project Component	Status	Update
Project Approval	Complete	The CRFREE Project and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) was approved by the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors June 15, 2021.
National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)	In progress	The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues its NEPA analysis of the Project as part of its consideration of the \$25 million grant funds proposed for the CRFREE project, inclusive of funding for the Carmel Area Wastewater District's (CAWD) project to underground its force main and sewer outfall pipes spanning the south arm of the Lagoon.
Construction and permitting	In progress	The current implementation schedule anticipates phase 1 restoration on the east side of highway 1 will begin in late fall 2022. Phase 1 will include grading, restoration planting, and beginning of the Ag preserve construction. A grading permit application was submitted to the County of Monterey in March 2022. Coordination activities with the Coastal Commission on CRFREE's Coastal Development Permit are continuing. Construction of the causeway and restoration on the west side of highway 1 is scheduled to begin in 2024 and will last approximately twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months.
Construction Phase MOU	In progress	The All-Party MOU for the construction phase is under review by the parties and will be considered for approval by the Board of Supervisors in April 2022.
Grant Funding	Ongoing	The California State Coastal Conservancy awarded the amount of \$4.25 million in February 2022. CRFREE is estimated to cost approximately \$43 million. Approximately \$11 million in grant funds have been awarded, with a further \$29 million applied for and pending. Staff are coordinating to fundraise to close the gap.