

County of Monterey



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July 5, 2023

Transportation Agency for Monterey County
55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, CA 93901
Attn: Executive Director Todd Muck

SUBJECT: Support for Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Corridor Climate Resiliency Project

Dear Director Muck:

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey Housing and Community Development, I am writing to express support for funding requests by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) for the Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Corridor Climate Resiliency Project.

The Project, located in Moss Landing, Monterey County, will begin the process of adapting the eight-mile stretch of Highway 1 through Moss Landing to the impacts of sea level rise and coastal flooding. This portion of Highway 1 is essential to freight movement and is a major commute route connecting Santa Cruz and Monterey. The railroad in this corridor runs through Elkhorn Slough for five miles and is critical to freight and passenger rail service to provide an alternative option to driving on US 101 to San Jose and the Bay Area. The Elkhorn Slough is a major estuary located in Monterey Bay, California. It provides valuable habitat area for hundreds of aquatic birds, fish, marine mammals, and invertebrate species and is critical to regional biodiversity. This region is highly vulnerable to sea level rise impacts.

The 2021 Central Coast Highway 1 Climate Study, led by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), evaluated adaptation strategies to improve the climate resilience of Highway 1 and the rail line through Elkhorn Slough. The County's Housing and Community Development Department participated in the Steering Committee for the 2021 AMBAG study and commends AMBAG for advancing this important work. This application for funding will build on the recommendations presented in the AMBAG study and other related studies by producing expanded transportation and climate modeling, development of nature-based solutions, and the project initiation documentation necessary to develop climate resilient solutions to the transportation needs in the corridor.

The County of Monterey strongly supports this important climate resiliency project and thanks you for your consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,

Luis A. Alejo, Chair
Board of Supervisors