



Sonoma County Coast Municipal Advisory Council

Sonoma County Fifth District Supervisor Lynda Hopkins
575 Administration Drive, Suite 100-A, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

2023 Annual Report

Brian Leubitz, Chair

Ms. Lynda Hopkins, Supervisor District 5 County of Sonoma
575 Administration Dr
Santa Rosa AC 95403
Dear Supervisor Hopkins:

The Coastal MAC would like to summarize our activities and accomplishments over the calendar year 2023 for you and other members of the Board of Supervisors. Our summary is drawn from the complete record of activities extracted from our meeting minutes over the past year as well as from board reports.

1. Bi-Monthly Meetings - The Coastal MAC has generally convened the third Thursday of every other month at 5:30 PM, with special meetings, called as necessary, historically redeploying at various venues within the MAC boundaries. This year was the first back from zoom in the aftermath of the pandemic. We held four meetings in Bodega Bay (including one special meeting focusing on the Local Coastal Plan), one in Fort Ross, and one joint meeting with the Lower Russian River MAC in Guerneville.

2. Message from the Chair – While our hybrid meetings have brought a number of challenges, being able to meet in person has been an enormous help in terms of collegiality between members and our relationships with County staff.

With that being said, the change to in-person meetings has meant difficulties for many members of the MAC as well as general members of the community. Given that the Coast MAC region is a roughly 90 minute drive from one end to the other, it can be difficult if not impossible for some to attend in person. This has been alleviated somewhat by our hybrid meetings and our occasional satellite location at the Sea Ranch Fire District facility. But attending in person for all of the meetings can be a hardship for some prospective MAC representatives. This is particularly true in winter at night and during the storm season, where traveling Highway 1 can be a risky drive. We look forward to working with the County to encourage relief from the state legislature that would enable us to strike a balance between in-person/hybrid meetings and occasional remote meetings.

Much of our energy this year, particularly at the beginning of the year, has been dedicated to the completion of the County's Local Coastal Plan (LCP.) We held a special meeting in June to discuss the last remaining issues that was attended by County Staff from Permit Sonoma as well as Supervisor Hopkins and District 5 staff. While the Sonoma County LCP is still pending before the California Coastal



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Commission, having a final opportunity before the final vote at the Board of Supervisors offered the community a chance to ask any remaining questions and provide final feedback.

In January, we had a presentation with representatives from PG&E to discuss recovery from the major storm systems that devastated the Coast in January. Power outages continued through the spring, so the entire community is hopeful that we will not see a major system like that and that PG&E and Sonoma Public Infrastructure will be better equipped to deal with the fallout from what is expected to be a wet winter.

In March, we had a presentation from Creative Sonoma and a discussion of proposed Vacation Rental Ordinance and the LCP. Because we did not have sufficient time to address everybody's concerns, a second meeting was scheduled. That meeting, mentioned above, occurred in Bodega Bay on June 22, and ran for over two hours. That time allowed for a diverse collection of questions, comments, and perspectives to be shared with representatives from Permit Sonoma and the District 5 team.

Our May meeting was held at the Fort Ross School, where we had a presentation from IOLERO and a brief discussion about the LCP in preparation for our June meeting.

Our July meeting was cancelled in favor of having a combined meeting in August with the Lower Russian River MAC, featuring an appearance by Sen Mike McGuire. Both MACs and attending community members had the opportunity to ask the Senator about issues relating to state parks, roads, wildfires, climate change and much more. Some fruitful conversations began at this meeting, with State Parks representatives beginning a dialogue with District 5 Staff and MAC members.

Our September meeting, which was held at the Bodega Bay School, included a presentation from the Sonoma County Library about the twice monthly visits from the bibliobus and other issues of coastal access to Library services.

During our November meeting, we will hear from two fire chiefs in the community to discuss their responses to the expected storms this year. Furthermore, we hope to learn more about the progress State Parks is making on their maintenance backlog when regional Parks representative Bill Maslach presents.

Finally, I would like to recognize all of the members of this organization. The MAC can be a difficult volunteer job, but we have seen a few superstars represent their communities. I would particularly like to thank three past Chairs of this Body for their work on getting the MAC up and running and steering it through its initial development. Thank you to Marti Campbell, Che Casul, and Scott Farmer for their years of service to their community.

Brian Leubitz

2023 Chair

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