

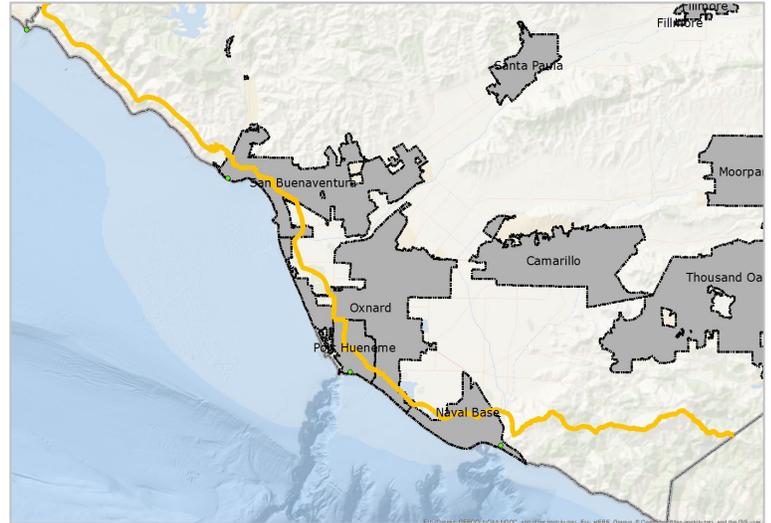


Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Local Coastal Program?

In 1976, the California Legislature enacted the Coastal Act, which created a mandate for coastal counties and cities to manage the conservation and development of coastal resources through a comprehensive planning and regulatory program called the Local Coastal Program.

Ventura County's Coastal Area Plan and the Coastal Zoning Ordinance together constitute the "Local Coastal Program" (LCP) for the unincorporated portions of Ventura County's coastal zone (see map). The primary goal of the LCP is to ensure that the County's land use plans, zoning ordinances, maps, and implementation actions are consistent with the Coastal Act. Coastal storm hazards are addressed in the County's LCP, and LCP amendments to address sea level rise may be needed.



— Coastal Zone Boundary

Why do we need to plan for sea level rise?

Sea level rise and a changing climate present new land use management challenges with the potential to significantly impact many coastal areas, including natural resources and public access. Recently, the State of California and the California Coastal Commission have sought to increase awareness and planning for the harmful impacts that may occur due to sea level rise. Beyond economics, the science shows that small beaches may become inaccessible and many public facilities could be temporarily flooded and seasonally closed. Practical, common sense steps to address sea level rise today may be the key to conserving the high quality of life associated coastal Ventura County in the future. The County's VC Resilient Coastal Adaptation Project aims to do just that.

What is the Vulnerability Assessment?

The Vulnerability Assessment is a report based on scientific computer modeling that identifies which coastal areas and specific assets may be impacted by sea level rise and storm flood hazards. Understanding how sea level rise will affect residents, businesses, community services, and infrastructure is the first step toward conserving coastal resources and ensuring safety. The information presented in the County's draft Vulnerability Assessment is based on a countywide analysis of unincorporated coastal areas. It includes an in-depth analysis of twelve resource sectors and an overview of sea level rise science and adaptation options. The Vulnerability Assessment also serves as the launching point from which the County can provide actionable results, build awareness, and facilitate collaboration. The report is a starting point to open community discussion and is intended to foster understanding that the future coastline could be very different from today's.



Map Assets and
Future Risk Scenarios



Assess Vulnerability



Provide
Actionable



Build Awareness



Facilitate
Collaboration

What scientific modeling was used in the County's Draft Vulnerability Assessment?

Two sea level rise models were used to develop the draft Vulnerability Assessment: the Coastal Resilience Ventura Hazard Models (2016) and USGS COSMOS 3.0 (2017). The Coastal Resilience Model includes coastal wave flooding, tidal inundation, and flooding associated with a FEMA 1% annual chance storm event. Both models were used to measure the potential for erosion of beaches on the Central Coast, and erosion of bluffs on the South Coast of the unincorporated area. The analysis of these two models is consistent with State guidance to use the best available science and they have been used by neighboring jurisdictions. The sea level rise model results differ from the adopted FEMA flood maps because they include projected increases in flooding and sea level rise, whereas the FEMA maps are based on historic data.

How were the sea level rise projections selected?

The scientific modeling described above was extrapolated to "low", "medium", and "high" projections for three "planning horizon" years (2030, 2060, 2100) and incorporated into the draft Vulnerability Assessment report.

- A "high" projection equivalent to 8 inches of sea level rise by year 2030 was selected because it provides a context to address current and near-term flooding hazards in current planning documents.
- A "medium" projection equivalent to 16 inches of sea level rise by year 2060 was selected because it has a comparatively high probability of occurrence.
- The "high" projection equivalent to 58 inches of sea level rise by year 2100 was selected because it is a close-to-worst-case scenario and follows the State's "precautionary principle" guidance.

EXISTING

8"

16"

58"

Science tells us that increases in sea level will occur, but it is less certain when they will occur. Rather than preparing for sea level rise based on planning horizon years (2030, 2060, 2100), it may be more pragmatic to prepare for the impacts based on the projected inches of sea level rise shown above.

Why do the vulnerability maps show so much of the coastline at risk?

Coastal areas are hazardous even without sea level rise. Even today, coastal floods, king tides, and strong wave events periodically impact coastal resources and development. Much of the County's coastal resources are already at risk of flooding. Sea level rise may increase this risk, especially at the highest projections. While all the impacts are unlikely to occur simultaneously along the County's coastline, it is important to identify those assets at risk. State guidance recommends using a "precautionary principle" by planning for the highest projected increase in sea level rise.

What are the next steps? How can I participate?

Adaptation to sea level rise hazards will require innovative approaches in the short and long term. The next phase of VC Resilient Coastal Adaptation Project will consider a variety of regulatory measures that could reduce potential impacts. Residents, business owners, and visitors are encouraged to become "sea level wise" in the following ways:

- Visit www.vcrma.org/vc-resilient-coastal-adaptation to learn more about the project.
- Subscribe to our stakeholder list to receive notifications on public meetings.
- Participate in upcoming Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors public workshops.

