



October 6, 2021

Via Email: PRMD-LCP-Update@sonoma-county.org

Permit Sonoma
Cecily Condon, Lead Planner
Gary Helfrich, Project Planner
PRMD-LCP-Update
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Dear Ms. Condon and Mr. Helfrich:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan Update ("LCP") and the zoning regulations associated with the Plan. Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) supports the Draft LCP and its balanced focus to protect the natural and cultural resources of our extraordinary coast while supporting the public's right to access the coast in an appropriate manner.

SLT has acquired, protected, and managed thousands of acres of coastal land since our founding in 1976 via conservation easements and land ownership. We have transferred many of these lands—including the iconic Red Hill and Jenner Headlands properties—to parks or other nonprofit organizations in order to provide expanded public access opportunities, protect natural and cultural resources and to showcase the compatibility of working landscapes and public recreation. SLT has provided guided hikes, volunteer days and educational opportunities to thousands of visitors on these lands over the decades, and we have focused considerable effort on stewarding these natural lands for native biodiversity and sensitive habitats.

SLT is pleased to see the *"preservation of natural resources ... outdoor recreation ... and the preservation of archaeological, historical, and cultural resources"* and the protection of Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) as core principles of the LCP. Sonoma Land Trust supports the County's commitment to preserve and expand appropriate public access and use of the coast for all Californians. As the Coastal Act clearly states it is *"essential to the economic and social well-being of the people of this state and especially to working persons employed within the coastal zone."*

In terms of specific suggestions, the Public Access Element FIGURE C-PA-1k (SubArea 10 Valley Ford) correctly identifies SLT's Estero Americano Preserve as a point of public access because we provide limited guided activities and environmental educational opportunities. Because the Estero Americano Preserve is not currently open for unguided public access and is surrounded by many private residential and ranching properties, we would recommend that it would be clearer if the maps denote whether or not a public access point is actually on public or private lands. For example, using a different color designation such as yellow for Point K2 to denote a public access point on private land or green for locations such Point I-30 on map FIGURE C-PA-1j (SubArea 9 Bodega Bay Vicinity) on public land, would help the public and private landowners better understand potential limitations and differences between these access points.

We appreciate the careful consideration and balancing of multiple interests in the coastal zone. This is not an easy task, but it is critically important, and we commend Sonoma County for continuing to protect our treasured coastline and its rich ecological resources and cultural heritage for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eamon O'Byrne". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Eamon O'Byrne
Executive Director