

June 4, 2022

Donne Brownsey, Chair
California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Subject: Hearing June 10, 2022 Item 13a – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Brownsey and Commissioners:


LandWatch Monterey County concurs with Coastal Commission staff report to support the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration project (CRFREE). We urge you to approve this project, which has been under development for decades. The project is one of the most important hazard mitigation, coastal resilience and habitat restoration projects along California's coast.

CRFREE will reduce flood risks to numerous Carmel Valley and Carmel residents and businesses within the FEMA 100-year floodplain. This project will achieve multiple flood control benefits through floodplain restoration in a coastal area of Monterey County that provides public access to all. Moreover, the project not only restores a long-over drafted coastal watershed, it also seeks to get ahead of climate-induced extreme weather events to improve flood plain hydrology.

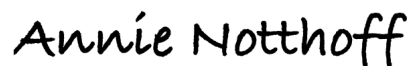
Co-sponsored by the Big Sur Land Trust and Monterey County, CRFREE is strongly supported by local agencies and residents. Funded by many State and Federal agencies, including the State Coastal Conservancy, CRFREE would remove about 1,470 feet of the south bank levee on the Carmel River to restore 100 acres of floodplain topography to support native habitat restoration, and replace a portion of the State Route 1 roadway embankment with a causeway to allow high stream flows to pass under the highway.

We urge your support the Commission staff recommendation to approve this extremely important project to the coastal communities of Monterey County.

Sincerely,



Michael DeLapa
Executive Director



Annie Notthoff
President, LandWatch Board of Directors