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TO: Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Commission

FROM: Ellen Dempsey, Contra Costa Health Services, Hazardous Materials Programs

DATE: January 11, 2021

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Actions related to HazMat Commodity Flow Study and Sea Level Rise

In conjunction with the ongoing work developing the County General Plan and Environmental Justice policies and actions, there has been much discussion regarding the role sea level rise will take in this planning document. Based on the findings of the Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study with Special Focus on Sea Level Rise and Flooding

(<https://cchealth.org/hazmat/hmc/adapting-to-rising-tides/pdf/Commodity-Flow-Study-with-Special-Focus-on-Sea-Level-Rise.pdf>) as well as the Adapting to Rising Tides project as a whole, I have put together the below recommendations.

Hazardous Materials and Sea Level Rise

A proactive approach in addressing added risk due to sea level rise and flooding will serve to protect the vulnerable populations within the County in the event of a transportation-related hazardous material accident/incident. This approach will also minimize disruption of essential services, facilities, and infrastructure, and will ultimately save lives and property. Below are actions developed regarding this approach as relates to Environmental Justice:

- Consider the project findings from the Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study in future planning, transportation improvement projects, and sea level rise and flooding mitigation measures to address the disproportionate impact to vulnerable populations.
- Incorporate the Hazardous Materials Programs in discussions and decision-making in these planning and improvement projects to identify where hazardous materials may have increased effect on vulnerable populations.
- Develop strategies, possibly legislative, to further involvement of the Rail Industry in local planning efforts to reduce risk from hazardous materials transportation, particularly as relates to sea level rise and flooding, as well as the rail line's role as ad hoc flood protection for our vulnerable communities.
- Begin to analyze how current policies address thresholds for action to effects on communities that have been identified as having additional risk from hazardous materials as relates to sea level rise and transportation. For example, identifying action levels for



infrastructure damage from sea level rise that will disproportionately impact our coastal communities.

- Be proactive in collaboration to lead in regional, state and federal efforts and initiatives to reduce the impacts of sea level rise in our community. Recognition of the dynamic nature of climate change issues on implementation and review of action items and policies.
- Provide education and resources to Vulnerable Populations, including businesses, who could be disproportionately impacted by risks to transportation due to flooding and sea level rise.

Overall, the goal would be to recognize and proactively address these health inequities before there are failures of our hazardous materials transportation pathways due to sea level rise and flooding.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ellen Dempsey, Hazardous Materials Specialist II

