



View of Elkhorn Slough and Moss Landing. Photo Credit: Paul Zaretsky

PROJECT SCOPE

Elkhorn Slough is a major estuary located in Monterey Bay, California. It provides valuable habitat area for hundreds of aquatic bird, fish, marine mammal, and invertebrate species and is critical to regional biodiversity. The health of Elkhorn Slough is a high priority for the region.

This region is highly vulnerable to sea level rise impacts. The eight-mile stretch of Highway 1 through Elkhorn Slough provides local access to Moss Landing, is essential to freight movement, and is a major commuting route connecting Santa Cruz and Monterey. The railway runs along the main stem of the Slough for five miles and is critical to freight and planned expansion of Caltrain service as an alternative option to driving the US 101 to San Jose.

The 2020 Central Coast Highway 1 Climate Study, led by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), developed and evaluated adaptation strategies for Highway 1 and the railway to improve resilience of transportation infrastructure and benefit Elkhorn Slough.

Project Request:

- \$2 Million
- Project Approval and Environmental Documents phase of the project to evaluate the viability of options and establish a scope and project design and to position the project for environmental clearance.



PROJECT LOCATION



Aerial view of Highway 1 with the junction of Highway 129 in the foreground. The Pajaro River is mid-picture, levee breach can be seen in the background. Photo credit: Caltrans



Photo Credit: Andrea Woolfolk

Elkhorn Slough Corridor Resiliency

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Improves Highway 1 transportation infrastructure through implementation of adaptation strategies that most benefit Elkhorn Slough and the surrounding ecosystem.
- Reduces tidal flooding and dangers to Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Reserve and the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary at Moss Landing.
- Improves safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.
- Provides congestion relief.
- Improves interregional travel along primary link between the Counties of Santa Cruz and Monterey.
- Will help prepare the Elkhorn Slough Resiliency Project for future local, state, and federal grant opportunities.



Previous flood hazard mapping work for the Coastal Resilience Monterey project show these major transportation assets and large swaths of Slough habitat, which provide invaluable ecosystem services to the region at large, are at risk under future sea level rise, with some areas impacted as soon as 2030. Source: Central Coast Highway 1 Climate Resiliency Study (July 2020)



January 2019 king tide railway flooding.
Source: Elkhorn Slough Foundation.