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Cultural and Historic Resources Element

I INTRODUCTION

I.1 PURPOSE

The Sonoma County Coastal Zone has a rich cultural history and contains significant archaeological and paleontological resources as well as historic structures and sites. These resources serve important social, commercial, recreational, and educational roles in the community while evoking the unique heritage of the Sonoma Coast.

This element provides policies for protection and enhancement of Sonoma County cultural and historic resources within the Coastal Zone.

“Cultural resources” refers collectively is used to archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains.

“Historic resources” refers to structures, sites and artifacts associated with colonization, settlement, and development of the Coastal Zone. Historic resources are generally structures, sites and artifacts

associated with non-Native American cultures during and after the Russian and Spanish colonial periods, but these sites may also contain cultural resources.

1.2 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES | CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

GOAL C-CH-1: Protect and preserve historical, archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains.

Objective C-CH-1.1: Establish and maintain a respectful and effective means of communicating and consulting with Tribes with regard to identification, protection, and preservation of these resources.

Objective C-CH-1.2: Require coastal development projects to identify, preserve, and protect Historic and Native American cultural resources, sacred sites, places, features, and objects, including historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, cemeteries, and ceremonial sites. Ensure appropriate treatment of Native American and other human remains discovered during the project.

Policy C-CH-1a: Refer applications for coastal development permits resulting in new ground disturbance, including but not limited to building, grading, or demolition projects, to the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University to determine if the project site may contain archaeological or historic resources. If a site is likely to have archaeological resources, a field survey and an archaeological resources report that contains the results of the survey and includes appropriate mitigation measures shall be required. If the site is likely to have historic resources, a field survey and an historic resources report that contains an evaluation of whether the historic resources are significant under state and federal criteria shall be required. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

Policy C-CH-1b: Refer applications for development permits that involve the removal, demolition, or alteration of a building, structure, site, cemetery, feature, or object identified in a Historic Resource Survey to the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission for review and mitigation, with the exception of such projects within The Sea Ranch, which shall be referred to the Sea Ranch Design Committee. Measures for removal or demolition may include reuse, relocation, preparation of as-built drawings, and photo-documentation. (GP2020)

Policy C-CH-1c: State law regarding tribal consultation shall be considered the minimum standard of review for Local Coastal Program amendments, implementation of programs and initiatives, review of coastal development permits, and CEQA review and shall follow the principles found in Policy C-CH-1e. (GP2020 REVISED)

Policy C-CH-1d: Development projects resulting in new ground disturbance, including but not limited to building, grading, or demolition projects shall provide a study prepared by a

qualified professional evaluating historical, archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains. This policy may not apply to sites where an adequate study was previously prepared and is determined to adequately evaluate cultural and historic resources that may be affected by the project. Previous studies will be referred to Tribes for comment and confirmation of adequacy. (NEW)

Policy C-CH-1e: To establish and maintain a respectful and effective means of communicating and consulting with Tribes the following principles shall be followed when evaluating coastal development projects: (NEW)

- (1) Communicate and consult with federally and non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes (Tribes) in a manner that is considerate and respectful. Seek tribal input regarding the identification of potential issues, possible means of addressing those issues, and appropriate actions, if any, to be taken by the County.
- (2) Assess the potential impact of proposed County actions on Tribal interests and ensure, to the maximum extent feasible, that tribal concerns are considered before such actions are taken, such that impacts are avoided, minimized, or mitigated in conformity with Coastal Act and other applicable legal requirements.
- (3) Provide Tribes with meaningful opportunities to respond and participate in County decision-making processes that affect Tribal Interests.
- (4) Acknowledge and respect both the confidential nature of information concerning cultural practices, traditions, beliefs, tribal histories, and Tribal lands, and legal protections of the confidentiality of certain tribal cultural information (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 6254(r), 6254.10, Pub. Res. Code § 21082.3(c)). The County will take all lawful and necessary steps to ensure confidential information provided by a Tribe is not disclosed without the prior written permission of the Tribe.
- (5) Encourage collaborative and cooperative relationships with Tribes in matters affecting coastal resources.
- (6) Acknowledge and seek ways to accommodate Tribes with limited financial and staffing resources, and staffing resources of the County and the California Coastal Commission to ensure effective communication and consultation, including joint consultation with the Coastal Commission Tribal Liaison staff.
- (7) Identify and recommend means to remove procedural impediments to working directly and effectively with Tribes.
- (8) Consultation should not be viewed as a one-time, one-meeting activity, but rather an iterative process.

Policy C-CH-1f: New development shall avoid impacts to cultural resources through siting and design measures to the extent feasible. Any unavoidable impacts, disturbance, or substantial adverse changes caused by development on cultural resources shall be mitigated through measures such as preservation in place or site sampling and salvage. The preferred and required alternatives for mitigating impacts, if feasible, are avoidance or preservation in place. Consult with Native American representatives on appropriate alternatives. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

Policy C-CH-1g: Continue to apply standard conditions requiring notification and evaluation in the event of the discovery of a burial or suspected human remains or other cultural resources, including consultation with the Most Likely Descendant as identified by the California Native American Heritage Commission, in the event that the remains are determined to be Native American. (GP2020 REVISED)