



Assembly Bill 72: Coastal Adaptation Permitting Act of 2021

SUMMARY

AB 72 will establish a coordinated and efficient process for coastal adaptation permitting, in order to cut unnecessary green tape and increase sea-level rise mitigation initiatives along the California coast.

BACKGROUND

The California coast is 840 miles of breathtaking beauty, home to 70% of Californians and a major engine of our State's economy. All of which is under profound threat from sea-level rise. Over the course of this century, sea levels are expected to rise by 7 feet. In California's coastal communities, millions of people and billions of dollars are at risk.

Scientists have determined that coastal adaptation initiatives are one of the most promising strategies to combat sea-level rise. Examples include:

- Replacing shoreline armoring with living shorelines – through beach nourishments, planting vegetation, etc.
- Creating and rehabilitating tidal marshes to buffer increasing tides
- Using natural breakwaters of oysters to dissipate wave action and protect shorelines

Coastal adaptation efforts like this face many challenges; including high cost, lack of available resources and a highly complicated approval process for coastal adaptation projects.

NEED FOR THE BILL

When applying for a coastal adaptation project, applicants submit separate permit applications to all related state agencies. Each agency then undertakes its own independent review on its own timeline with its own requirements.

Permit applicants report that the current multi-agency process is often disjointed and labyrinthine,

which has proven to be a significant barrier to getting good projects underway.

The state's environmental permitting system is designed to protect valuable public trust resources, which is of paramount importance. However, the current protracted and uncoordinated review process is causing unnecessary delays for valuable coastal adaptation projects and hindering innovative approaches. In order to address the urgent threat of sea-level rise, we must cut unproductive Green Tape.

SOLUTION

AB 72 would direct the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to evaluate and implement a more coordinated and efficient regulatory review process for coastal adaptation projects, and report to the Legislature on suggestions for improvement by July 1, 2023.

SUPPORT

California Environmental Justice League
Surfrider Foundation

CONTACT

Shannon Swanson | Legislative Aide
Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris
Shannon.Swanson@asm.ca.gov | (916) 319-2074