



## TRANSPORTATION AGENCY FOR MONTEREY COUNTY

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### **HIGHLIGHTS**

**December 3, 2025**

#### **Highway 1 Elkhorn Slough Corridor Climate Resiliency Project**

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC), working collaboratively with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (ESNERR), will evaluate the risk of sea level rise impacting a key transportation corridor in north Monterey County and develop multimodal and nature-based transportation adaptation solutions to address this vulnerability.

The project is funded with \$2,250,000 from a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Climate Adaptation Grant program grant to prepare a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study and related documents, expanding on existing feasibility studies on nature-based and multimodal solutions to climate change impacts on the corridor.

This project focuses on an eight-mile stretch of Highway 1 through the disadvantaged community of Moss Landing and the parallel five miles of rail tracks traversing Elkhorn Slough. Providing multimodal options and integrating nature-based solutions are top priorities for this project. The corridor traverses Elkhorn Slough, a major estuary located in Monterey Bay, California, which provides valuable habitat area for hundreds of aquatic birds, fish, marine mammals, and invertebrate species.

Tidal estuarine habitats within the Slough, and the ecosystem services they provide, are at risk of substantial degradation and losses from sea level rise. Coastal Resilience Monterey predicts sea level rise to be 5.2 feet by 2100. The rail tracks through Elkhorn Slough, owned by Union Pacific railroad, carries freight rail traffic and Amtrak Coast Starlight passengers. The Central Coast Highway 1 Climate Resiliency study examined the climate impacts on the rail corridor and recommended an elevated trestle through the slough. This, along with other alternatives, will be considered during the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL Study) process.

A key component of the PEL study is to gather input and build consensus among internal and external stakeholders to shape the proposed corridor transportation vision. This is a comprehensive approach that involves resource and regulatory agencies, tribes, local stakeholders and engaging the public on an ongoing basis in meetings, workshops and public hearings and notices. Staff will seek feedback and input from stakeholders as key milestones of the project are reached.

After receiving the presentation, the TAMC Board of Directors approved the draft public outreach schedule.

### **TAMC Board Authorizes Agency Participation in the American Air Advantage Consortium to Support Local Advanced Air Mobility**

The TAMC Board learned that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has launched the Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing Integration Pilot Program to accelerate safe deployment of Electric Vehicle Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) and advanced air mobility technologies across the United States. This three-year pilot program will select a minimum of five regions nationwide for real-world testing and operational demonstrations.

The program aims to demonstrate the viability of eVTOL aircraft for passenger transport, cargo logistics, and emergency services, while developing safety data and regulatory frameworks for integrating these aircraft into the National Airspace System.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Board authorized the agency to participate in the American Air Advantage Consortium and similar efforts to support local Advanced Air Mobility transportation innovation, economic growth, and job creation, because the Monterey Bay region hosts one of the highest concentrations of eVTOL testing and manufacturing in the country, including Joby Aviation's facilities in Marina and Santa Cruz.

The consortium includes a range of public and private partners working in Northern California on Advanced Air Mobility, including: University of California Santa Cruz; Monterey Bay Economic Partnership; Drones, Aviation, and Robotics Technology; and 14 corporate entities operating in the unmanned aircraft space.