California Coastal Act Policies Most Relevant to Water Quality and Management of Stormwater Runoff

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§	Coastal Act Policy	Relevance to Water Quality & Management of Stormwater Runoff
30230	Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.	**Protection of marine resources:** ➢ Provides a broad basis for protection and enhancement of marine resources. Requires that uses of the marine environment sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and maintain healthy populations of all marine species. ➢ Protection of marine life may be adversely impacted by the discharge of pollutants and increased stormwater runoff flows due to development.
30231	The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.	**Protection of coastal water quality and control of runoff:** ➢ Establishes the Coastal Commission's authority to protect the water quality of all coastal waters, including waterways, lakes, wetlands, estuaries, and marine waters. This policy requires that coastal water quality be maintained, and where feasible restored, to protect marine organisms and human health. Water quality may be protected in a variety of ways, including by controlling wastewater discharges and stormwater runoff. ➢ This policy also protects groundwater supplies and surface water flows.

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30232	Protection against the spillage of crude oil, gas, petroleum products, or hazardous substances shall be provided in relation to any development or the transportation of such materials. Effective containment and cleanup facilities and procedures shall be provided for accidental spills that do occur.	**Spill prevention and cleanup:** ➢ Provides the Commission with authority to protect coastal watersheds from spills of petroleum products and other hazardous substances. ➢ Although most often used to address potential large spills from industrial facilities, this policy also applies to the numerous small spills and leaks of hazardous substances that may commonly occur throughout the watershed. Small spills and leaks cumulatively contribute to polluted runoff and result in the degrada-tion of coastal resources. ➢ Provides a basis for implementing spill prevention measures for every development project. Protection against spills should not focus solely on containment and cleanup of spills but should prioritize spill prevention measures to keep hazardous substances from entering coastal waters.
30233 (a)	(a) The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects....	**Regulation of diking, filling, or dredging:** ➢ Regulates hydromodification activities involving the diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes. These activities may adversely impact the water quality of these coastal waters. ➢ Establishes three tests for coastal planners to evaluate such activities: 1. Whether the project is one of eight allowable uses. 2. Whether the project is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative. 3. Whether the project requires use of feasible mitigation measures (e.g., U.S. EPA's Nonpoint Source management measures and Best Management Practices) to minimize any adverse environmental effects of these activities.

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30235	Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fish kills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.	**Regulation of shoreline protection structures:** ➢ Provides the basis for regulating shoreline protection structures that alter natural shoreline processes of water and sand movement. ➢ Limits shoreline alteration structures to those required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures and beaches from erosion, when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on sand supply. ➢ Provides the basis for removing or upgrading marine structures that impair water circulation and contribute to water pollution.
30236	Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible, and be limited to (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the floodplain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat.	**Regulation of alterations of coastal waterways:** ➢ Requires that channelization and other substantial alterations of coastal waterways incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible. This may include the U.S. EPA's Nonpoint Source management measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs). ➢ Limits permissible alterations to: 1. Necessary water supply projects. 2. Flood control projects necessary for public safety or to protect existing development where no alternative methods are feasible. 3. Projects whose primary function is to improve fish and wildlife habitat.

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30240	(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such areas. (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreational areas.	**Protection of Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs):** ➢ Section 30240(a) mandates that ESHAs be protected from significant disruption of habitat values. This disruption includes adverse impacts from runoff pollutants and increased runoff flows due to development. ➢ Section 30240(b) mandates that development in areas adjacent to ESHAs and adjacent to parks and recreation areas be sited and designed to prevent impacts that would significantly degrade those areas. This includes adverse impacts from runoff pollutants and increased runoff flows due to development.
30243	The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of noncommercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.	**Protection of forest soils and timberlands:** ➢ Addresses development on forested lands for projects where timber is removed without a Timber Harvest Plan. Protection of the productivity of forest soils and timberlands includes protection from impacts of runoff pollutants and increased runoff flows that may increase erosion.

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30250 (a)	(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources....	**Consideration of cumulative adverse impacts in siting new development:** ➢ In siting new development, requires consideration of the cumulative adverse impacts of other development in the watershed on coastal resources. ➢ Significant adverse effects on coastal resources includes degradation of water quality and increased runoff flows due to development.
30251	The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms...	**Minimizing alterations of natural landforms:** ➢ Provides the Coastal Commission with authority to ensure that development is sited and designed so that the alteration of natural landforms is minimized. ➢ Minimizing landform alteration can reduce the potential for erosion and sedimentation.
30253	New development shall do all of the following: (a) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard. (b) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.	**Minimizing erosion, flooding, and geologic instability:** ➢ Provides the Coastal Commission with authority to ensure that development does not significantly contribute to erosion, flooding, and geological instability. This may include limiting development activities sited in areas that are highly erodible, have steep slopes, or have unstable soils. ➢ Provides the Coastal Commission with authority to require a development to minimize increases in the volume and flow rate of stormwater runoff from the site. Increased runoff flows may increase erosion, flooding, and geologic instability, adversely impacting habitats and structures.

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30412	(a) In addition to Section 13142.5 of the Water Code, this section shall apply to the commission and the State Water Resources Control Board and the California regional water quality control boards. (b) The State Water Resources Control Board and the California regional water quality control boards are the state agencies with primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality. The State Water Resources Control Board has primary responsibility for the administration of water rights pursuant to applicable law. The commission shall assure that proposed development and local coastal programs shall not frustrate this section. The commission shall not, except as provided in subdivision (c), modify, adopt conditions, or take any action in conflict with any determination by the State Water Resources Control Board or any California regional water quality control board in matters relating to water quality or the administration of water rights. Except as provided in this section, nothing herein shall be interpreted in any way either as prohibiting or limiting the commission, local government, or port governing body from exercising the regulatory controls over development pursuant to this division in a manner necessary to carry out this division. (c) Any development within the coastal zone or outside the coastal zone which provides service to any area within the coastal zone that constitutes a treatment work shall be reviewed by the commission and any permit it issues, if any, shall be determinative only with respect to the following aspects of the development: …	**Conflicts with determinations of the State and Regional Water Boards:** ➢ Establishes that the Commission's actions on proposed development and Local Coastal Programs shall not conflict with any determinations by the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards regarding water quality and water rights. ➢ However, the Commission is not prohibited from imposing requirements for development that are more protective of coastal resources than those of the Water Boards. This is not considered to conflict with Water Board determinations, such as the requirements of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) stormwater permits. ➢ Also establishes the Commission's authority to review development that constitutes a treatment work that provides service to any area within the coastal zone. Treatment works (as defined in the federal Clean Water Act §1292(2)(A)) means any device or system used for preventing, reducing, storing, treating, recycling, reclamation, or disposal of municipal sewage and storm water runoff, or liquid industrial waste.