



COASTAL RESILIENCE VENTURA

WITHIN AN HOUR'S DRIVE OF AN ESTIMATED 12 MILLION PEOPLE, AN OASIS OF PLANTS AND animals still attests to the expansive wilderness that once covered Ventura County. Bobcats, mountain lions, deer, songbirds, and raptors traverse this land, and native fish, amphibians and waterfowl occupy its wetlands. And a river runs through it - the Santa Clara - providing an important source of fresh water for communities, ranchers and farmers, and some of southern California's most critical coastal wetlands. Amazingly, this exists amidst cities, a major military installation, and some of the most high-value agriculture in the nation. All these resources - natural, social, and economic - are threatened by climate-driven changes to the coast and rivers, including sea level rise, accelerated erosion, more intense flooding, and saltwater intrusion into groundwater. Ventura County's coast needs to be resilient.

Coastal Resilience Ventura, a project of The Nature Conservancy, is designed to identify solutions to the social, economic and environmental disruptions brought about by climate change and coastal hazards. The goal is to use science, decision-support tools, partnerships and policy to create strategies that are cost efficient and effective for both people and nature.



HELPING NATURE HELP YOU

Communities will have to adjust to numerous climate-driven changes, but there are a range of adaptation approaches from which decision-makers will choose. For example, communities may respond to the threats to health and safety with engineered infrastructure such as levees. These approaches are expensive to install, require costly on-going maintenance, and can exacerbate risk in other places by disrupting natural coastal and floodplain processes.

On the other hand, nature holds some of the best, most practical, and cost-effective world's solutions to climate change, solutions that keep nature and people healthy, safe, and secure.

Robust, resilient ecosystems can serve as protective buffers for human communities from sea level rise and storm events, while continuing to provide sources of food, fresh water, and livelihoods - provided we manage them adequately to increase their resilience.

Responding to climate change will require communities to adopt a range of solutions, depending on local resources and priorities. Coastal Resilience Ventura is working to ensure that - where appropriate - decision-makers have the tools to choose solutions that help nature help communities.

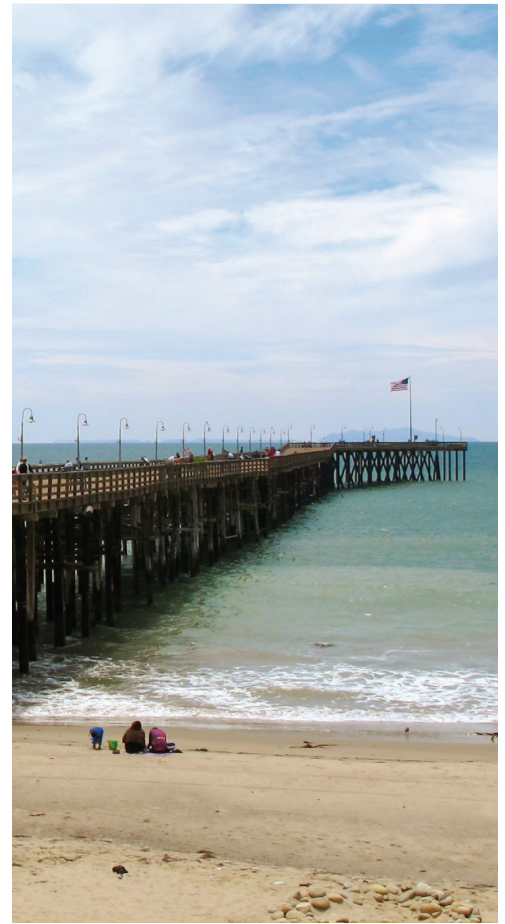


THE RIGHT TOOLS

The degree to which communities are vulnerable to climate change is influenced by local conditions including culture and community priorities, economic base, ecological setting, and local resources. Many of the decisions that are most critical to reducing climate risks, such as land use, hazard mitigation, and economic development, are made locally – and often without specific reference to future conditions, including climate-driven changes. There are a variety of tools and strategies that communities can use in responding to climate change, but these tools are rarely designed with a community's specific priorities in mind. What resources do we value? How will these be impacted by future conditions? What decisions are we making now that will constrain our future options? What are our choices and what are their costs and benefits?



The Nature Conservancy's Coastal Resilience Ventura project works directly with local stakeholders and decision-makers to develop the tools and information that answer these questions for specific local contexts, and helps decision-makers visualize vulnerabilities and options. In Ventura County, we have assembled a Steering Committee representing diverse stakeholders – people with interests and assets that are threatened by climate change, and who are empowered to make decisions to protect these interests and assets. The Steering Committee is the soul of the project: their insights to inform the scientific assessment of future conditions, the data represented in our tools, and the response strategies analyzed and implemented.



HELP NATURE HELP YOU!

Check out Coastal Resilience Ventura at
[http://coastalresilience.org/
geographies/ventura-county](http://coastalresilience.org/geographies/ventura-county).

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The Nature
Conservancy



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

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