

MEMORANDUM

DATE April 22, 2021

TO Julie Harris, County of Santa Barbara, Senior Planner (Interim Project Manager)
Whitney Wilkinson, County of Santa Barbara, Senior Planner
David Lackie, County of Santa Barbara, Supervising Planner

FROM Tammy L. Seale, PlaceWorks, Climate Action and Resilience, Principal
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SUBJECT One Clime Initiative and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment – Virtual Community Workshop #1 Summary

This memorandum summarizes the first virtual community workshop held as part of the first phase of outreach for the County of Santa Barbara One Climate Initiative with a focus on the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA). The County offered two sessions of the workshop, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Each session followed the same agenda, covering the same information, to ensure wider community participation. This memorandum includes a description of the workshops, discusses the questions asked of participants in small group breakout rooms, and presents the results of each question. A full summary of the small group breakout room discussions is provided in Attachment 1.

Community Workshop Summary

The County hosted two, hour and a half community workshops online via Zoom on December 9, 2020 in effort to raise awareness amongst the Santa Barbara community about the One Climate Initiative and the CCVA. The first session was held at 12:00 p.m. and the second session was held at 6:00 p.m., both following the same agenda and including the same project information and materials.

PlaceWorks project manager Tammy Seale facilitated the workshop and provided ongoing support while the County staff CCVA project manager Whitney Wilkinson and One Climate Initiative project manager Garret Wong led the presentation. PlaceWorks assistant project manager Eli Krispi served as support staff during the question-and-answer portion of each session. In addition, staff from the County and PlaceWorks provided facilitation and notetaking support during small group discussions. County Supervisors Das Williams and Joan Hartmann provided opening remarks during the evening session.

The workshop included several accessibility options to ensure that all participants could learn about the One Climate Initiative and CCVA. All project materials, including flyers, small group discussion documents, the PowerPoint presentation, Eventbrite registration, and Participation Guide were provided in both Spanish and English. The presentation and breakout rooms also had options for both Spanish and English. The Spanish presentation was provided by a County-certified translator through a Spanish language channel on Zoom and one of the breakout rooms was dedicated to Spanish speakers.

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The County's Planning and Development Department, Community Services Department, and Public Information Office coordinated to promote the workshop online via social media posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The workshop was also promoted on the County's website and through e-blasts, e-newsletters, and distributing a press release.

Participants registered for one or both sessions through Eventbrite in advance of the workshop. Workshop registrants received multiple reminder emails in advance of the sessions. The reminder emails also included a Workshop Participation Guide and links to the One Climate Initiative webpage containing project information and draft documents to review in advance of the workshop. A total of 90 stakeholders registered for the 12:00 p.m. session, of which approximately 70 attended, and a total of 52 stakeholders registered for the 6:00 p.m. session, of which approximately 38 attended.

The workshop recordings, presentation slides, and other materials in both English and Spanish can be viewed on the project website [here](http://www.countyofsb.org/ccva). (www.countyofsb.org/ccva)

WORKSHOP PURPOSE AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

The County hosted the workshop to raise awareness and promote the One Climate Initiative launch, while informing community stakeholders about the CCVA, to share an in-depth overview of the CCVA process and the next steps to initiate the analysis. The County is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable, and transparent opportunity for participation in the CCVA planning process.

The goals for participants at the workshop included:

- » Participant will become aware of the One Climate initiative and learn about the One Climate projects, including the County's efforts to-date and anticipated work in the next couple of years.
- » Participant will understand how to best engage with staff and the projects.
- » Participants will have a better understanding of the CCVA, including what it will accomplish and why the County is preparing it.
- » Participants will learn about how Santa Barbara may be harmed by climate change.
- » Engage with other stakeholders to hear and share their concerns, ideas, and vision for an equitable, sustainable, and resilient Santa Barbara County.
- » Engage with members of the One Climate project team and talk about how climate change has affected them/the community and share ideas.
- » The County will provide an inclusive, equitable, and transparent opportunity for participation in the planning process.

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AGENDA

Each session of the workshop followed the same agenda. Please see **Attachment 1** for a full summary of the small group discussions.

12:00 pm/6:00 pm	Welcome and introductions to Workshop, County Staff, and project team
12:10 pm/6:10 pm	Agenda review and poll
12:15 pm/6:15 pm	Project presentation
12:40 pm/6:40 pm	Visioning Word Cloud Activity using Mentimeter
12:45 pm/6:45 pm	Introduction to small group breakout discussions
12:50 pm/6:50 pm	Small Group Breakout Discussions
1:20 pm/7:20 pm	Reports from small groups
1:30 pm/6:30 pm	Workshop wrap-up and end

PROJECT PRESENTATION

The project presentation provided participants with an overview of the One Climate Initiative and an introduction to the CCVA project. The presentation had three parts: 1) an introduction of the project team, 2) an overview of the One Climate Initiative, and 3) an overview of the CCVA project. Workshop facilitator Tammy Seale introduced the Project Team and reviewed the agenda.

Garrett Wong with the County Community Services Department presented the goals, flagship projects, outreach schedule, and ways to get involved with the One Climate Initiative. The flagship projects include the CCVA, in addition to the 2030 Climate Action Plan, Active Transportation Plan, and Central Coast Community Energy Enrollment. The Outreach Program began with this workshop and will go through 2022 for drafting and implementing these plans.

After Garrett Wong concluded his presentation, Whitney Wilkinson with the County Planning and Development Department provided an overview of the CCVA project. This included the purpose of the project, the guidance for conducting a vulnerability assessment from the California Adaptation Planning Guide, a summary of key climate effects the project will assess, and a review of frontline communities and community assets the Project Team will be assessing. Whitney also introduced the Engagement Map, which is available on the project website www.countyofsb.org/ccva.

Following the presentation, community workshop participants posted questions to the Project Team through the chat feature of the Zoom meeting. The questions included the following:

- » Does this apply to So Cal Edison customers? (in reference to 3CE and Garrett's slides)
- » Is there a link for this engagement map?
- » And for customers, on 3CE, what does opting in do for the customer, what should their expectations be?
- » Goleta Beach was listed as an asset, but is it also considered an at-risk ecosystem / natural resource (the beach and slough)?
- » How will you verify/qualify the community inputs to the map?
- » How will you be coordinating with the City's recently approved update process for the municipal CAP that has been approved by the City?
- » What is the timeline for 3CE in Buellton?

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Figure 2. Results of the 6:00pm Word Cloud Activity



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

After the Mentimeter word cloud activity, community workshop participants joined small groups with facilitators and notetakers. The small group discussions allowed for an in-depth discussion of how climate hazards have affected them in the past and which areas or assets are most vulnerable to hazards in the future. The small groups were created using the breakout room feature of the Zoom platform and the interactive activity included use of Google Docs, allowing participants to see the notes on the notetaker's shared screen as the discussions occurred. Small group facilitators asked participants an introductory question and four questions related to their experiences and concerns with climate change and climate hazards.

1. How have climate hazards or natural disasters affected you and/your community?
2. What climate hazards, changes, or impacts are of most concern to you?
3. What areas of the county seem most vulnerable to climate change and natural hazards/disasters?
4. Who do you think will be most affected by climate changes and potential impacts?

Community workshop participants expressed support for both the One Climate Initiative and the CCVA project. Recurring topics in breakout room discussions included evacuation, wildfire, extreme heat, flooding, sea level rise, housing, transportation, agriculture, and vulnerable populations. Several discussions groups expressed areas of concern such as the wildland-urban interface, low-lying coastal areas, communities living along riverine systems, and remote areas of the county. A full summary of the breakout room discussions is provided in **Attachment 1**.

POST-WORKSHOP SURVEY

After the workshop, the County sent workshop registrants a link to a post-workshop survey through Eventbrite. A total of 20 workshop participants responded to the following survey questions.

1. **Share any comments you have on Santa Barbara County Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment:** Participants felt the County had a grip on the project and knew what they were

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talking about. Some found it very educational and appreciated the opportunity to contribute to a sustainable and resilient county.

2. **How likely is it for them to participate in a future online/virtual workshop or event hosted by the County?** All but 2 respondents answered Yes.
3. **Please provide feedback on the virtual workshop event (e.g., setup, length, breakout rooms, etc.):** Participants were very receptive to the breakout rooms. There was an overall consensus regarding the effectiveness, educational, and engaging aspects of the breakout rooms.
4. **If you are interested in receiving a response to your comments or updates on the project, please provide your name and email address below.** Nine survey respondents provided email addresses to receive updates on the project.

Next Steps

This memorandum provides the summary of the first community workshop, which launched the One Climate Initiative and provided important input for the CCVA. The CCVA project team will use this feedback to directly inform the assessment of hazards and impacts when conducting the vulnerability assessment.

Attachment 1– Small Group Discussion Summary

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

After the presentation and question and answer portion of both workshops, community workshop participants joined small groups with a facilitator and a notetaker. The small group discussions allowed for an engaging and in-depth exploration of specific topics and issues using the breakout room feature of the Zoom platform. Small group facilitators asked participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name, neighborhood, organization or business represented if applicable, and their favorite thing about the county. Following introductions, facilitators guided discussions in response to four questions.

1. **How have climate hazards or natural disasters affected your and/your community?** Climate hazards would include those mentioned in Whitney’s presentation, like wildfires, extreme heat/heat waves, wildfire smoke, windstorms/extreme weather, flooding, sea level rise, high tides, or similar events.
2. **What climate hazards, changes, or impacts are of most concern to you?** These can include changes or events that have happened or are expected to happen here in the county or other parts of California.
3. **What areas of the county seem most vulnerable to climate change and natural hazards/disasters?** Responses should focus on areas of the unincorporated county, but we’ll take all responses.
4. **Who do you think will be most affected by climate changes and potential impacts?** “Who” can include populations/group types, communities, businesses/economic sectors, or other interpretations.

The majority of workshop participants chose to provide suggestions to the County regarding steps to move toward a more sustainable and collaborative community. Most of the participants expressed support for the County’s CCVA while providing constructive feedback to increase success in future resiliency and adaptation strategies included in the CCVA. The feedback received for each question, from both workshops, is summarized by question.

QUESTION 1:

How have climate hazards or natural disasters affected you and/your community? Climate hazards would include those mentioned in Whitney’s presentation, like wildfires, extreme heat/heat waves, wildfire smoke, windstorms/extreme weather, flooding, sea level rise, high tides, or similar events.

Workshop participants’ responses are presented below, sorted into six categories: 1) suggestions, 2) wildfires/extreme heat, 3) evacuations, 4) housing, 5) flood/sea level rise, and 6) general comments.

Suggestions

Community Participation, Collaboration, and Resiliency

- » More education opportunities need to be provided to those who are not familiar with wildfire risks and evacuation efforts.
- » Platform should be developed for citizens, businesses, and other nonprofits who wish to participate and contribute during a disaster response should be made available.
- » How can the County best partner with public sector groups and other community groups to be more prepared and provide aid and allocate available resources?

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- » Going to where people work or congregate, for those who can't attend these outreach meetings to actively engage them or figure out ways to pull marginalized communities into these types of meetings.

Wildfires/ Extreme Heat

Areas of Concern

- » The hillside areas
- » Santa Ynez Valley

Challenges/ Barriers

- » Wildfires have increased each decade and pose a significant threat.
- » Wildfire impacts, concerning frequency and intensity.
- » Being underprepared such as lack of food and water or late fire evacuation notices.
- » Major communitywide concerns related to ongoing fire hazards and climate change.
- » Encroachment.
- » Heat and drought have devastating impacts on the agricultural sector and its workers, as well as the natural habitat.

Resilience and Mitigation

- » Identify and plan for emergency evacuation routes.
- » Identify and plan for access points for emergency personnel to access fire zones.

Health

- » Living with constant and expanded threats of fire, smokey air, and all the negative impacts on the quality of life is stressful.
- » Set notification systems to warn community about safety concerns due to wildfire impacts and air quality.
- » Physical impacts such as migraines and other long term affects related to fires.

Evacuations

Disaster Preparedness

- » There needs to be a robust disaster preparedness plan.
- » Subsequent debris flow impacts HWY 101 and rail.
- » Transportation and accessibility redundancies in our systems/infrastructure need to be addressed.

Housing and Transportation

Equity

- » Major impacts from Covid, fires, and heatwaves disproportionately impact lower income individuals, students, and the ways in which they're experienced by different communities is something we should take into account.
- » Severe housing crisis in the county; specially in the South Coast. Teachers, doctors, EMTs, and others face challenges when it comes to living where they work.
- » Housing and transportation - there needs to be alternatives to transportation to help reduce GHG impacts, by promoting more active transportation opportunities.

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- » Workforce housing concerns - policies should be requiring employers to provide transportation in order to reduce roundtrips and GHG emissions.
- » Improve requirements for transportation for an employer, newer employers but not for existing.
- » Renters are unable to adequately adapt to natural hazards.

Floods and Sea Level Rise

Areas of Concern

- » Lower west side has flooding issues.
- » Carpinteria area.
- » Isla Vista community.
- » Housing should not be permitted in flood hazard zones.

General Comments

Many community workshop participants provided miscellaneous comments. These are as follows:

- » Given the huge sense of community when one thing affects one it affects all of us.
- » Seeing worldwide differences and in our region makes us realize that our realities are unique, and the challenges ahead are real and must be addressed.
- » Vast amount of plastic is found in wildlife.
- » Modeling impacts of climate change predictions have come true, science has proven to be true, for example: sea level rise, UCSB bike path impacts.
- » Wildfires, emergency evacuations, debris flow, along with the prolonged health risks of poor air quality impacts the enjoyment of the county and area.
- » Fires are becoming more and more commonplace.
- » Essential workers who lack appropriate safety measures for work such as PPE and may lack health care benefits are highly at risk to the impacts of climate change.

QUESTION 2:

What climate hazards, changes, or impacts are of most concern to you? These can include changes or events that have happened or are expected to happen here in the county or other parts of California.

Workshop participants' responses are presented below, sorted into four categories: 1) suggestions, 2) agriculture, 3) barriers/challenges, and 4) general comments.

Suggestions

- » There needs to be better systems in place for rain retention, bio swales, debris basins, green infrastructure used to capture stormwater runoff and is recycled into landscaping.
- » County should leverage community partnerships with water districts and other water resources.
- » Provide awareness by telling the history of affected areas by climate change.
- » Carbon sequestering needs to improve in the county through more tree planting.

Agriculture

- » Crops need to be analyzed to determine which are most stable under extreme conditions.
- » Extreme droughts pose great threats to agriculture.

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- » Agriculture faces large economic impacts.

Challenges and Barriers

- » Those lacking proper air conditioning systems during extreme heat creates major health concerns.
- » There needs to be a robust disaster preparedness.
- » Connectivity issues considering the Thomas fire, subsequent debris flow impacting the HWY 101 and rail. Transportation and accessibility redundancies in our systems/infrastructure need to be addressed.

Transportation

- » Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through incentivizing more biking, mass transit, EV, walking, and ridesharing.
- » Make residents more aware of the number of gallons of gasoline they consume on average.
- » Fade out diesel equipment and replace with reliable renewable energy systems.
- » Sea level rise poses a severe threat to transportation systems, recreation and housing.

Floods and Sea Level Rise

Areas of concern

- » Lower East Side Santa Barbara is seeing sea level rise.
- » Sea level rise near Mesa Cliffs.
- » Must preserve beaches at all costs.
- » Carpinteria is only 7 feet above sea level in some areas.

General Comments

Many community workshop participants provided miscellaneous comments. These are as follows:

- » The County needs to prevent or slow down any further sprawl.
- » Due to long period of drought and lack of rain this puts enormous pressure on our community's assets.
- » Provide adequate water supply in anticipation of increasing housing stock.
- » The interconnection of hazards sheds light on the importance of biodiversity.
- » Biodiversity loss impacts wildlife, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, smoke and air quality.
- » People of color already don't feel welcome and safe in Santa Barbara, with sea level rise where will people go.
- » New big businesses and corporations in the Carpinteria and Goleta areas are bringing in new jobs that mainly require specific qualifications and training.
- » Need more sufficient water resources that cater to all residents.
- » Limit oil companies applying for exemptions.
- » Oil drilling is prone to spilling and the consequences on our water must be considered before approving any oil projects.
- » Butterfly populations in the Santa Barbara and SLO have been dramatically reduced.
- » Santa Barbara can be a model for other places.
- » Need for green energy.

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QUESTION 3:

What areas of the county seem most vulnerable to climate change and natural hazards/disasters?

Responses should focus on areas of the unincorporated county, but we'll take all responses.

Workshop participants' responses are presented below, sorted into four categories: 1) vulnerable populations, 2) areas of concern, 3) floods and sea level rise, and 4) general comments.

Vulnerable Populations

- » Getting necessary messages out and in the appropriate languages for evacuation and emergency information.
- » Elderly population.
- » Populations lacking larger social networks and community connections.
- » It is important to conduct a detailed analysis of communities who may be left out due to census counting methods.
- » Areas of the county that are most vulnerable aren't provided the opportunities to be heard.
- » Agricultural communities may face physical and economic impacts.
- » Communities of color.
- » Low-income and impoverished communities.
- » Unsheltered populations.
- » Extreme droughts pose great threats to agriculture.

Areas of Concern

- » Areas developed on wetlands, missing conventional assessments.
- » Communities living along streams and river systems are most vulnerable to flash flood storms.
- » Areas close to ocean and wilderness have a greater vulnerability.
- » Montecito/Summerland, in the backcountry area are at risk of wildfire impacts and threats in the WUI (wildland-urban interface) area.
- » Foothills and WUI boundaries.
- » Entire South Coast due to the proximity to the WUI.
- » Coastal infrastructure.
- » Northern and central county.
- » Santa Barbara city area and south county.
- » Solvang, Santa Ynez, Lompoc, Buellton, and Santa Maria.
- » 101 freeway can't possibly sustain the need to become a major evacuation corridor.
- » Low-lying areas, Goleta Slough, the airport (economic driver) and neighboring areas, UCSB, downtown, Vandenberg Air Force Base, City of Lompoc and surrounding areas.
- » Evacuation routes, especially in rural/forested areas are insufficient.
- » The parts closest to the coast are vulnerable due to sea level rise and fluvial flooding.

Floods and Sea Level Rise

- » Ocean life, channel island impacts, and sea level rise impacts on tidal zones, and slough areas/wetlands.

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- » Coastal infrastructure needs to better assess.

General Comments

Many community workshop participants provided miscellaneous comments. These are as follows:

- » All areas of the county are vulnerable to one impact or another. Important to prepare the community for the future (adapt & mitigate) whether that means planned retreat from the coastline, etc.
- » Carpinteria has gone through disaster training (possibly through the County).
- » It is important to keep issues around climate change apolitical.
- » Food systems in the unincorporated areas should be prioritized.

QUESTION 4:

Who do you think will be most affected by climate changes and potential impacts? "Who" can include populations/group types, communities, businesses/economic sectors, or other interpretations.

Workshop participants' responses are presented below, sorted into four categories: 1) suggestions, 2) vulnerable populations, 3) business sectors, and 4) areas of concern.

Suggestions

- » Implement both unconventional and traditional communication methods to reach a larger audience.
- » Must expedite the communication process when threats are present.

Vulnerable Populations

- » Low-income populations.
- » Renters and rent-burdened populations.
- » Non-English speakers.
- » Future generations.
- » Elderly populations and or populations with limited mobility.
- » Populations with disabilities.
- » Healthcare workers.

Business Sectors

- » Restaurant sector.
- » Agricultural sector.
- » Oil industry.
- » Fishing industry.
- » Tourism and tourism-dependent businesses.
- » Public sector.

Areas of Concern

- » Residents living near WUI.
- » Remote areas.
- » Housing near areas of sea level rise threats.