



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 16, 2015

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## **Press Release: Citizens Document “King Tides” to Help Cities Plan for Sea Level Rise**

(San Francisco, CA) Early next week, residents in communities throughout California will document the year’s highest tides to help coastal cities plan for sea level rise. These “king tides” – as the highest annual tides are called – provide a glimpse of what the state can expect from sea level rise in the coming years. The January king tides (occurring January 19 - 21) are the second winter king tide event, and are the highest tides of the year. A final series of king tides will occur February 17-19.

"King tides give us a glimpse of the potential 'new normal' along the California coast," said Coastal Commission Executive Director Charles Lester. "These extreme tides may become routine in coming years. Documenting them is a great opportunity for students and citizen scientists to help us prepare for the future. The Coastal Commission is working to address the impacts of sea-level rise to our beaches, wetlands and critical infrastructure through grants and partnerships with local governments who are on the front lines of critical planning efforts."

Building on five seasons of sea-level rise outreach, the California King Tides Project now seeks to build partnerships through citizen science projects happening across the State. The King Tides Project is working with citizen scientists, including students and local residents, to photograph these ultra-high tides, which highlight the way homes, harbors, and other infrastructure, as well as beaches, wetlands, and public access to the coast may be affected by sea level rise in the future. Additionally, photographs taken of flooding during storm events during any high tide or “nuisance flooding” are also useful since they would indicate an exacerbated hazard if coupled with a king tide. Municipal officials and climate change researchers will then use these images to validate sea level rise models and to build a hyperlocal catalogue of flood vulnerability data for use in community planning projects.

In a report released last year, the National Academy of Sciences projects approximately one foot of sea-level rise by 2050 and up to five feet by 2100 along the California coast. The Army Corps of Engineers has advised planners to make plans for infrastructure with a conservative estimate of five feet in sea level rise by the end of the century. With this in mind, king tides illustrate what the average daily tide will be in 50 years – and during these winter king tides, we can witness how hazardous storm events can be exacerbated by higher water.

Participants can submit and view images at [www.flickr.com/groups/cakingtides](http://www.flickr.com/groups/cakingtides).

Visit <http://california.kingtides.net/plan/> to find locations to view king tides throughout California.

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