

THINGS TO DO

Vallejo Sea Level Rising Tour explores waterfront, community engagement

Solano Bay Shore Resilience hosts an informational walking tour to identify how rising sea levels could impact Vallejo's shoreline



Ellen Plane, with the San Francisco Estuary Institute talks about sea level rise during a waterfront 'Sea Level Rise Walking Tour' in Vallejo on Saturday. (Chris Riley/Times-Herald)



By **SARAH RODRIGUEZ** | srodriguez@timesheraldonline.com

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The Bay Area could see up to 10 inches of sea level rise by 2050.

Solano County, with its low-lying land along the Bay Shore, is one of several regions vulnerable to these rising levels — which experts say could be up to inches by 2050.

On Saturday, residents showed up for an interactive walking tour of Vallejo's Waterfront hosted by Solano Bayshore Resiliency. The event was part of the organization's Resiliency Project, an effort to identify community-centered solutions to protect local ecosystems.

Solano County and the Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District are partnering with surrounding cities to plan for the region's "resilience" as sea levels continue to rise. The collaborative efforts will result in a Regional Shoreline Action Plan to help communities both adapt and prepare.

People walk along the Vallejo waterfront during a 'Sea Level Rise Walking Tour' on Saturday. (Chris Riley/Times-Herald)

"Climate change is a global phenomenon, but the impacts can be felt locally," said Solano Resilience Manager Nate Huntington. While related conversations tend to veer toward the somber, he says they could benefit from collaborative solutions.

"Sea level rise is a challenge," said Huntington. "It can seem daunting, but it's also an opportunity to think about what you love and care about in your community."

Throughout the tour, residents hear directly from project experts such as the City of Vallejo Planning Staff, Vallejo Watershed Alliance, the Flood and Wastewater District, as well as Ellen Plane, a Senior Scientist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute.

Conversations spanned from the ways in which rising sea levels could threaten homes, roadways, businesses, and natural habitats along shorelines. Buried flood and wastewater lines can also be impacted by reduced capacities

The cause? A few reasons, explained Plane, who specializes in shoreline resilience, sea-level rise adaptation, and nature-based solutions.

"As the atmosphere is warming, it also causes the temperature of water in the oceans to warm, which causes thermal expansion," said Plane.

The other reason, she added, is the melting of polar ice caps. "All that new water that's currently locked up in ice is coming into the ocean, causing the level of water to rise."

While both are causes for concern, the Bay Area, in particular, she noted, fortunately, has quite a proactive adaptation community. One of which is Solano Bayshore Resiliency.

The real takeaway from the event, aside from "allowing folks to learn a little bit more about sea level rise — how it'll affect the local shoreline here in Vallejo," said Plane, "was giving them the opportunity for them to write input about the community assets that are important to them."

A considerable portion of the event encouraged residents to look inward, consider the regions and infrastructures of Vallejo that they consider most important. "What do you love about Vallejo?" Huntington asked the crowd.

The project, while still in its community assessment phase, proactively aims to gather information on those areas of importance for consideration in its Regional Shoreline Action Plan.

"For this project to be successful, we need people's voices," explained Huntington. We need people's input to be able to talk about what they love here — what community centers, libraries, businesses, roads people rely on, and infrastructures that are important to people."

Learning these aspects helps further the project's efforts to determine how it can better protect Vallejo as rising sea levels ensue.

At this point in the project, we're really interested in understanding these things," he said, "It's about how we can ensure to adapt and protect things



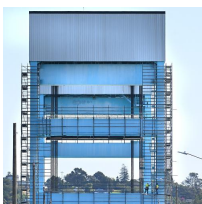
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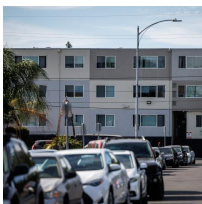
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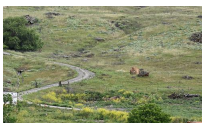
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2026 >
March >
7
