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## **COASTAL EROSION**



Source: Mark Wolfe/FEMA

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The California coast, while a world-famous scenic resource, is potentially vulnerable to coastal bluff retreat, bluff-top erosion, gullying, and beach erosion. Coastal bluffs can be subject to rapid landscape change through undercutting and slope collapse, erosion, and cliff retreat. These geologic hazards can all be grouped under the general process of “coastal erosion”.

Coastal erosion occurs as a result of natural processes such as tides and currents, long-shore drift, storm surge, sea level rise, and earthquakes. Erosion rates depend on the underlying geologic materials and their susceptibility to the weathering effects of gravity, wind, and water (including rain and waves).

Coastal erosion is not among the natural hazards required for real estate disclosure by the State of California. However, local officials may consider it to be a factor in deciding a building permit application for coastal parcels. Because municipal regulations may require appropriate steps to mitigate coastal erosion hazards, this could affect project cost, permit approval and, ultimately, land use for a coastal property owner.

Many cities and counties along the California coast include a map of coastal bluff or erosion hazards in their General Plan Safety Element, and a prospective buyer may consider this to be material if the sale property is located in the locally mapped zone.

*(Additional sources: US Geological Survey)*