



## Transcript of Video Interview with Lew Reid, recorded August 2012.

This interview is part of Earth Alert's Heroes of the Coast video archive, featuring interviews with leading California coastal activists, past and present California Coastal Commissioners and Coastal Commission staff. For more information, visit [www.earthalert.org](http://www.earthalert.org).

### Lew Reid on Legislative Reauthorization of Prop. 20

JB: It was necessary to take Prop. 20 back to the legislature, because some of the things that were lost in the process, for example the regional commissions and affordable housing, were disadvantageous to activists and other people. What are your thoughts on why Prop. 20 was structured so it would sunset and go back to the legislature?

LR: Well, at the time, we really did have a concern about being sure that the constitutionality of the act was ironclad. There was case law at the time that suggested that taking, such as requiring beach access for developments, might be problematic. And we knew that in order to be sure that it was constitutional, it was necessary to have a well-developed policy basis...have it grounded in a policy that had been worked out. That was the reason for having the Coastal Plan. And the fact that the initial legislation was not permanent in our mind assured that we would not lose a constitutional fight over the initiative.

So I think that at the time we believed we were doing the right thing in order to get the commission up and running and be sure that it was invulnerable to constitutional attacks.

JB: The initiative itself, Prop. 20, which evolved from the legislation, of course, as you've told us that was introduced three years in a row. If you were to assign authorship, was it one person, was it many people, would you care to name some of the people who were involved in drafting it?

LR: I think that the authorship is vested in more than a committee. A lot of people had inputs. They had inputs during the two years that the legislation was in Sacramento. There was input from environmental groups and other groups all around the state. All of that was taken into account, and when 1972 started, we looked it and said, "we want a document which is more environmentally sound. We'll take out some of the compromises that had been made in the legislature, and we also want a document where anything that might risk the constitutionality be taken out.

Now there were a lot of people involved. I had two young lawyers in my firm...a fellow named Ray McDivit, who still practices in San Francisco and a man named Ron Gilson, who now is a law professor at Stanford and Columbia. Both of them worked on the issue. Peter Douglas in Alan Sieroty's office. Gene Varanini in Paul Priolo's office, Alan Pardue had a say in it, and Janet certainly was right there. So the process by which we got to the text of the initiative was that a lot of people had input, and the input was primarily for the two objectives that I just described.

JB: I'm glad you mentioned Janet Adams again. It seems like for a lay person, she had a very fine legal mind.

LR: She was a very smart woman and she'd been through the campaigns for the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, for the Save the Bay campaign. So she was up-to-date and adept at the land use issues around the Bay, which were very similar to the issues that were raised by the coastal legislation.

JB: I think that's all.

LR: You don't my story about the lawyers.

JB: Yes, I do. Of course, I do. So tell us the story about Mel Lane.

LR: So Janet sent several of us out on forays with Mel Lane to talk to editorial boards at various newspapers. And I remember when Mel and I went to the San Francisco Examiner, a Hearst newspaper and we expected we were going to have a discussion with the editorial page editors about whether they would endorse the bill. And in fact, the fellow who carried the conversation was a fellow named Hearst who wanted to know what we were going to do with Hearst Ranch and the Hearst castle, and we did not get that endorsement.

JB: Do you remember other newspapers who did or didn't endorse Prop. 20?

LR: Well, I remember the Chronicle. Tim Peck was the editor at the time and they were certainly very supportive of what we were doing.

JB: Do you remember if the LA Times endorsed it?

LR: I'm pretty confident that they did, but I don't know.

JB: Thank you very much. You said something so concisely, it's probably going to be the conclusion of the documentary. That's when I kind of spaced out there, because I could see it. There's the clip!