



Staff Recommendation
February 26, 2020

Item 4

Strategic Priorities to Protect California's Coast and Ocean

Mark Gold, Executive Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council adopts the following resolution pursuant to Sections 35500 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

"The California Ocean Protection Council hereby adopts the *Strategic Plan to Protect California's Coast and Ocean: 2020 - 2025* (Exhibit A) and directs staff to work with agency and other partners to implement this plan over the next five years."

LOCATION: Statewide

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A: *Strategic Plan to Protect California's Coast and Ocean: 2020 - 2025*

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The Ocean Protection Council's (OPC) previous strategic plan outlined priorities to protect coastal and ocean ecosystems between 2012 and 2017.¹ In early 2019, OPC staff initiated a process to develop an updated strategic plan that would guide priorities over the next five years, from 2020-2025. A draft was provided to the Council for discussion at its November 13, 2019 meeting and public comments were accepted between November 1 and December 13, 2019.

The bold final plan, entitled "*Strategic Plan to Protect California's Coast and Ocean: 2020 – 2025*" (Exhibit A), was informed by feedback from OPC members, extensive public comments, existing state agency planning and technical documents, and numerous discussions with state agency staff. **The Strategic Plan aims to reflect collective action by all relevant partners within the state** and contains four overarching goals with objectives that include numeric targets with associated deadlines and actions. The goals of the plan are:

¹ A Vision for Our Coast and Ocean , California Ocean Protection Council Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2012-2017:
http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/2012-strategic-plan/OPC_042412_final_opt.pdf

- **Goal 1: Safeguard Coastal and Marine Ecosystems and Communities in the Face of Climate Change**, including actions related to sea-level rise, coastal erosion, ocean acidification, and climate-related research.
- **Goal 2: Advance Equity Across Ocean and Coastal Policies and Actions**, including action related to improving engagement with California tribes and underserved communities, improving coastal access, and enhancing healthy human use of the coast and ocean.
- **Goal 3: Enhance Coastal and Marine Biodiversity**, including action related to marine protected areas, coastal sediment management, kelp forest ecosystem health, thriving fisheries, improved water quality, marine invasive species, and accelerated collaboration and accountability.
- **Goal 4: Support Ocean Health through a Sustainable Blue Economy**, including action related to sustainable seafood and aquaculture, oil platform decommissioning, offshore renewable energy, and decarbonizing shipping and ports.

The objectives, targets and actions in the plan will require extensive collaboration across government agencies, tribes, and stakeholders. Plan execution will result in greater coastal resilience to sea-level rise and ocean acidification, greater protection of California's precious ecosystems including wetlands, beaches and kelp forests, a stronger blue economy with a sustainable seafood industry and offshore renewable energy generation, greater inclusion and engagement with California's tribal and underserved communities, and universal affordable access to our spectacular beaches, coastal resources and coastal waters. Successful achievement of these strategic priorities will require a significant investment from the local, state, federal and private sectors and will advance the Newsom Administration's priorities of climate resilience, biodiversity and access for all.