



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ocean Protection Council

FROM: Abe Doherty, Project Specialist

DATE: June 28, 2013

RE: Outreach Strategy for the Updated State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document

EXHIBITS: [State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document](#)
[Outreach Strategy](#) for Updated State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document

BACKGROUND

In March 2013, Ocean Protection Council (OPC) staff presented to the OPC the recently updated [State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document](#) (“Updated SLR Guidance Document” – see Exhibit 1). The *Updated SLR Guidance Document* includes revisions to the sea-level projections consistent with those found in the National Research Council report, [Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon and Washington](#). The previous version, the [State of California Sea-Level Rise Interim Guidance Document](#) (*Interim Guidance Document*) was completed in October 2010, based on recommendations from the Ocean Protection Council’s Science Advisory Team and consultation with the Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team (CO-CAT).

After the *Interim Guidance Document* was completed, the OPC adopted a [resolution](#) on March 11, 2011, which stated that state agencies, as well as non-state entities implementing projects or programs funded by the state or on state property, including on lands granted by the Legislature, should do the following:

1. incorporate consideration of the risks posed by sea-level rise into all decisions regarding areas or programs potentially affected by sea-level rise;
2. follow the science-based recommendations developed by the CO-CAT, which will be revised in future guidance documents developed by the CO-CAT;
3. not solely use sea-level rise values within the lower third of the range in the latest CO-CAT guidance document, and instead should generally assess potential impacts and

vulnerabilities over a range of projections, including analysis of the highest values presented in the latest CO-CAT guidance document;

4. avoid making decisions based on sea-level rise values that would result in high risk; and
5. coordinate with one another when selecting values of sea-level rise and use the same baseline projections of sea-level rise for the same project or program, with agency discretion to use higher projections and apply a safety factor as necessary.

The resolution also recommended that state agencies should carefully invest public funds and incentivize sea-level rise risk reduction by following the recommendations within the resolution when providing funding to non-state entities, to the extent permissible by law.

After adoption of the resolution by the OPC on March 11, 2011, OPC staff identified 46 state agencies and entities whose jurisdictions were impacted by sea-level rise and coordinated with the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, John Laird, to send letters to the heads of these entities to inform them of the *Interim Guidance Document*. OPC staff subsequently met with many of the leaders of these state entities who had not been part of the CO-CAT.

OPC staff coordinated with state agencies who were implementing funding programs, to support adding consideration of sea-level rise to the funding decisions. For example, the Strategic Growth Council, Department of Water Resources and Coastal Conservancy adopted revised funding guidelines to incorporate sea-level rise into funding decisions.

OUTREACH STRATEGY

The outreach strategy for the *Updated SLR Guidance Document* is presented in Exhibit 2. The strategy was designed to focus OPC staff actions on achieving the following goals:

1. The *Updated SLR Guidance Document* is included in top level state documents related to climate change.
2. Key state regulators, infrastructure agencies, and state agencies administering significant grant programs recognize the *Updated SLR Guidance Document* and include it as part of evaluating sea-level rise impacts on projects and reducing risk.
3. Entities involved in the design of coastal and bay projects are aware of the *Updated SLR Guidance Document* and use it to understand and reduce risk from sea-level rise.
4. The *Updated SLR Guidance Document* supports the incorporation of future inundation and flooding risks as part of flood planning and risk reduction activities.

The outreach strategy identifies key messages, audiences, actions and estimates OPC staff time for achieving the four goals, which will be accomplished through a variety of communication methods, including correspondence sent to state entities. OPC staff will focus on coordination with staff from state agencies with regulatory, infrastructure and grant administration responsibilities. OPC staff will also collaborate with staff from state and federal agencies to develop tools that use the *Updated SLR Guidance Document* to help local governments and other entities understand future flood and inundation risks and to take action to reduce risks.