



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Ocean Protection Council  
**FROM:** Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director OPC; and Skyli McAfee, Executive Director OST and Science Advisor OPC  
**DATE:** November 21, 2013  
**RE:** New Member Selection for the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT)

### REQUESTED ACTION:

The Executive Directors of OPC and OST recommend the council approve the following resolution:

“The Ocean Protection Council approves and adopts the following nominees as new members of the OPC Science Advisory Team.”

### BACKGROUND

Pursuant to AB 1056 (Leno) the OPC established a Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) consisting of up to 25 respected scientists from across a range of ocean and coastal disciplines and research institutions. The mission of the OPC-SAT is to support the OPC in ensuring that the best available science informs OPC policy and funding decisions.

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) coordinates all activities of the OPC-SAT. OST is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation dedicated to helping scientists and decision-makers work together more effectively. OST’s executive director also serves as the OPC science advisor and co-chair of the OPC-SAT. Over the course of 2013, Ocean Science Trust (OST) coordinated a public nomination process to identify two scientists to recommend for two vacancies: a marine biologist, and a social scientist.

The OPC-SAT have submitted the following candidates for formal confirmation by the OPC:

- Dr. Gretchen Hofmann (marine biologist, UC Santa Barbara)
- Dr. Holly Doremus (lawyer/social scientist, UC Berkeley)

### Role of the OPC-SAT

OPC-SAT members serve as an effective portal to the wider scientific community for the OPC, as well as other state agencies and offices. Members must be willing to respond to the state’s needs in a formal process, including work groups and meetings, and provide requested information or reviews, sometimes on short notice. The OPC-SAT supports the state with advice related to, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Identify and Prioritize Emerging Issues and Priorities:
  - Providing recommendations on high level strategic planning to the OPC based on emerging issues and/or scientific innovations
  - Identifying critical emerging science issues that should be of concern to the state
  - Assisting in describing, refining, and ranking research priorities
- Responding to State Information Requests:
  - Developing recommendations on scientific issues identified by the OPC
  - Providing technical expertise and advice on and review of OPC project reports, literature reviews, and agenda items

- Convening technical working groups to address critical management problems
- Conduct Scientific Review of State Proposals and Products:
  - Evaluating the technical merit of scientific and technical projects proposed to the OPC
  - Suggesting outside experts to serve as peer reviewers for OPC proposals and projects, as well as products of other state, federal, and non-governmental entities

### **OPC-SAT Vacancies - 2013**

Three vacancies became available earlier this year. When seats on the OPC-SAT become available, OST conducts a public nomination process. To initiate this process, OST engaged with OPC management to identify the expertise that would serve the OPC in coming years, and determined that OPC would best be served by:

1. a marine biologist with specialization in the physiology of marine organisms, including response to ocean acidification; and
2. a social scientist or interdisciplinary expert in marine studies, including challenges facing ocean management, capacity within governments to address those challenges, and the connections between science, policy and management decisions.
3. an expert in understanding tribal perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge in marine resource management.

Upon formulation of these vacancy descriptions, OST released a public notice of vacancy, including instructions for making nominations. These materials were posted on OST's and OPC's websites, distributed over the OPC listserv, and spread through other public platforms. The nomination period lasted one month, and all nominations were submitted to the OST Executive Director/OPC Science Advisor. The response to the first two of these vacancies was significant – OST received over ten highly qualified nominees for each slot from universities and research institutions in California and beyond. The response for the third identified area of expertise was weak, totaling only two nominations. The OPC leadership and the Science Advisor have agreed to regroup over the outreach plan of this selection while moving forward on the other two.

Following the nomination period, OST contacted each nominee to confirm their interest in serving, and to gain additional, standardized background for the selection process. OST compiled all materials and engaged first with the OPC-SAT executive committee to narrow the list of nominees, then provided that list to the full OPC-SAT to vote on.

This process yielded the following two, highly qualified candidates:

- **Dr. Gretchen Hofmann, Professor, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, UC Santa Barbara:** An expert in the responses of marine organisms, especially marine invertebrates, to ocean acidification and ocean warming, Dr. Hofmann was nominated for the marine biologist vacancy. Dr. Hofmann already has extensive experience in the science policy interface in California, and is also a panelist on the West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel.
- **Dr. Holly Doremus, Professor of Environmental Regulation, UC Berkeley School of Law:** Dr. Doremus was nominated for the social scientist vacancy. She is a law professor with training in natural science (PhD in plant physiology) whose research focus has long been on the various challenges of natural resources management, including the management of ocean resources. She has written extensively about the role of science (and the limits of science) in natural resource management, addressing topics such as the appropriate use of adaptive management, the meaning of scientific integrity and how to assure it, and the role of institutional structures and cultures in the use and production of policy-relevant scientific information.