



Item 6

**TO:** Ocean Protection Council  
**FROM:** Abe Doherty, Project Manager  
**DATE:** November 21, 2013  
**RE:** Sea-Level Rise Technical, Facilitation and Writing Services  
**ATTACHMENT:** [OPC Resolution on Seal-level Rise](#)

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Approve funding for technical, facilitation and writing services for sea-level rise, coastal storms and shoreline change.

**LOCATION:** Statewide

**STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE:** Climate Change

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

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

“The Ocean Protection Council hereby authorizes \$250,000 in funding for technical, facilitation and writing services related to sea-level rise, coastal storms and shoreline change.

Staff further recommends that the Ocean Protection Council adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the Ocean Protection Council hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the purposes of Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, the Ocean Protection Act.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Ocean Protection Council's Grant Funding Procedures (Interim Standards and Protocols, August 2013).”

California will experience increasingly significant impacts from the combined effect of sea-level rise, extreme high tides, storms and coastal erosion. These impacts are playing out differently along the coast, bays and delta, depending on the shoreline structure, development patterns and many other variables. The technical, facilitation and writing services provided under this project will support state agencies and other entities to be better informed and to take action to reduce risks from flooding, inundation and erosion.

**BACKGROUND:**

In March 2011, OPC adopted a sea-level rise resolution (Exhibit 1), which resolved that OPC, in close coordination with state agencies, would engage in a public stakeholder process to develop guidance and to identify actions that the state and the OPC can take to address the areas of greatest need regarding coastal and ocean climate change adaptation. At this time the OPC also resolved to continue to support data collection, monitoring, development of decision support tools and guidance to improve adaptation decision-making, in addition to the development and application of common climate change modeling assumptions so that actions are based on shared information and current scientific information.

OPC staff is currently collaborating with the Deputy Secretary for Climate Change and Energy within the Natural Resources Agency and other state agencies within the CA Climate Action Team (CAT) and its sub group the California Coastal Climate Action Team (Co-CAT) on the drafting of the *Safeguarding California Plan*, an update to the 2009 CA Climate Adaptation Strategy. It is anticipated that this plan will recommend that the OPC take a leadership role in coordination with other state entities to take action on sea-level rise.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

In order to improve the capacity of entities within California to respond to the risks from sea-level rise combined with coastal storms and shoreline change, the OPC will conduct a competitive selection process in compliance with the state's contracting guidelines in order to retain experts to provide technical, facilitation and writing services. OPC staff will refine the scope of work for the services based on further discussions on the priority needs of state agencies including those that make up California's Coastal Zone Management Program (Coastal Commission, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Coastal Conservancy) and other agencies such as the State Lands Commission, Office of Emergency Services, Governor's Office of Policy and Research and Department of Water Resources. The priority technical services may include activities such as:

1. review of recent scientific literature, such as the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) report on the physical basis for climate change;
2. development of recommendations for actions to reduce risk from sea-level rise, coastal storms and shoreline change, such as:
  - a. guidance on assessing impacts and vulnerability, given the wide range of future sea-level rise and challenges with predicting shoreline change,
  - b. developing a framework for supporting action at multiple scales,
  - c. addressing barriers to effective actions,
  - d. improving adaptive capacity of responses to SLR, storms and erosion,
  - e. guiding principles and policies, and
  - f. tools for effective actions to reduce risk;
3. development of data and mapping products; and
4. providing resources on funding sources and mechanisms for supporting sea-level rise assessments and adaptation projects on local, sub-regional, regional and statewide scales.

As described below, the California Ocean Protection Act supports OPC in funding this project and the OPC has funding authority to take appropriate actions to implement the project.

### **PROGRAM FINANCING**

Ocean Protection Council	<u>\$250,000</u>
Total Project Cost	\$250,000

The anticipated source of funds will be the fiscal year 2008 appropriation from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). Proposition 84 authorizes the use of these funds for purposes consistent with Section 35650 of the Public Resources Code, establishing the California Ocean Protection Trust Fund (Pub. Res. Code § 75060(g)). Under section 35650(b), Ocean Protection Trust Fund monies may be expended for projects authorized by the OPC that are identified as appropriate Trust Fund purposes. These purposes include projects that provide funding for adaptive management, planning, coordination, and other activities to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise on California's ocean ecosystem. (Pub. Res. Code § 35650(b)(2)(J)).

## **CONSISTENCY WITH CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION ACT:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Ocean Protection Act (Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code). Specifically, the project is consistent with Public Resources Code Section 35615 in that the project supports coordination of state agencies to protect ocean resources.

The project is also consistent with Section 35620 goals, which include council support to: 1) state agencies' use and sharing of scientific and geospatial information for coastal- and ocean-relevant decision making, and 2) baseline scientific and geospatial information that is available to public agencies which assess the effects of climate change. The proposed project will potentially result in maps, scientific and technical assessments, and sea-level rise assessments that will improve management of coastal resources.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH THE OPC'S STRATEGIC PLAN:**

### **Focal Area B (Climate Change), Issue 4: Impacts to Coastal Communities by Storms, Erosion and Sea-Level Rise.**

This project directly implements two objectives from OPC's 2011 Strategic Plan:

**Objective 4.1:** "Improve knowledge and understanding of climate change impacts among state, regional and local decision-makers." By providing funding to address priority needs of state agencies in addressing sea-level rise, this project will improve understanding of climate change impacts.

**Objective 4.2:** "Encourage the development and adoption of sea-level rise adaptation strategies." By providing funding to address priority needs of state agencies in addressing sea-level rise, this project will encourage development and implementation of adaptation strategies.

## **CONSISTENCY WITH THE OPC'S GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING GUIDELINES:**

This project to provide technical, facilitation and writing services to address sea-level rise is consistent with the Interim Standards and Protocols for the OPC Grant Funding Procedures (August 2013) in the following respects:

1. **Project Eligibility** – As discussed above, this project is consistent with the California Ocean Protection Act and the OPC Strategic Plan. The project is directly related to the coast, associated estuaries and coastal-draining watersheds since the focus is on addressing sea-level rise vulnerabilities. OPC staff will work with other key state agencies to ensure that the services address priority needs of public agencies. The funding supports efforts that are of greater-than-local interest since it will address priority needs of state agencies in reducing risks from sea-level rise.
2. **Applicant Eligibility** – OPC staff will ensure that all of the entities that are selected under a competitive process in accordance with the state's contracting manual are public agencies, nonprofit corporations or private entities subject to Public Resources Code Section 35650.
3. **Program Priorities** – The projects recommended for funding under the Grant Round support implementation of the OPC's Strategic Plan, including the following goals:
  - Improve decision-making through use of best available science by state entities and agencies charged with ocean and coastal stewardship.
  - Prepare for and reduce harmful impacts of climate change on coastal development and infrastructure, public health and safety, the economy, and ecosystems by encouraging adaptation to climate change and engaging decision makers at all levels of government.
  - Reduce the negative impacts of land-based activities on marine ecosystems and the state's coastal and ocean economy.

**COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:**

The proposed projects are categorically exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to 14 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 15306 because they involve data collection, research and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource; and Section 15262 in that they involve feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which have not yet been approved, adopted or funded. Staff will file a Notice of Exemption upon approval by the OPC.