



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATER RESEARCH PROJECT
A Public Agency for Environmental Research

December 5, 2016

The Honorable John Laird, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Laird and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

Please accept this letter of support for the staff-recommended \$445,000 in funding to support California Ocean Science Trust's (OST) role as Science Advisor to the Ocean Protection Council and convener of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT).

As a member of the SAT since its inception, I have seen the OPC's effectiveness enhanced by creation of the SAT. The independent scientific advice provided by this interdisciplinary team of 26 experts provides a strong scientific foundation for OPC decisions. In addition, through its annual meetings, the SAT serves as conduit to the broader scientific community, providing a venue for discussion about how the scientific community focuses its work to better inform the State. This funding will support several ongoing SAT committees, such as those presently providing advice on topics such as issuance of scientific collecting permits in Marine Protected Areas, effects of climate change on fishery management plans, and strategies for monitoring and responding to harmful algal blooms. As the impacts of climate change to continue to worsen, the need for science-based solutions that the SAT provides grows more urgent.

In addition, I am a former Governing Board member of the Ocean Science Trust and have observed how OST has added value to the OPC beyond its role in facilitating the SAT. One such recent example is the OST's success in leading the Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH) Panel, which effectively illuminated a path forward for State managers, and which OPC has appropriately adopted as its roadmap. As a legislatively formed non-profit, OST is also uniquely positioned to engage the scientific community and other partners in addressing the OPC's priorities, as evidenced by ways that they assisted OPC staff in engaging the federal agencies and other west coast states in implementation of the OAH Panel. Moreover, as a non-profit, OST has also been able to garner funds to leverage these projects through sources that are not typically available to state agencies.

Effective ocean management is dependent on creating a strong linkage between scientists, managers and policy-makers. OST, and the SAT they support, are one of the shining examples of a structure for ensuring that California is a recognized leader in science-informed decision-making. I encourage you to continue the partnership that facilitates that relationship by approving funding for this item.

Sincerely,

Stephen Weisberg, Ph.D.
Executive Director



Monterey Bay Aquarium

886 CANNERY ROW
MONTEREY, CA 93940
831.648.4800

December 2, 2016

The Honorable John Laird, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Staff Recommendation on Provision of Science and Science Communication Services

Dear Secretary Laird and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

On behalf of The Monterey Bay Aquarium, I am writing to express our support for the staff recommendation at the upcoming December 7, 2016 Ocean Protection Council (OPC) meeting for authorization to disburse \$445,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to continue its role as Science Advisor to the OPC and convener of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT).

In 2007, the OPC formally designated the Ocean Science Trust Executive Director as its Science Advisor. As part of that role, the Ocean Science Trust serves as convener of the OPC-SAT, an interdisciplinary team of 26 experts in social and natural science, and traditional ecological knowledge. Ocean Science Trust has utilized this important position to engage and mobilize the scientific community, citizens, NGOs, and other partners on behalf of the OPC's most pressing priorities.

Ocean Science Trust working with the OPC-SAT have advanced sound science to improve ocean and coastal resource decisions, including:

- The West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel;
- Rapid response to identifying and clarifying the scientific considerations of more frequent and severe harmful algal blooms;
- SAT Working groups on priority ocean science and management issues;
- Conducting scientific peer review of fishery management plans and other state-funded products.

Through annual OPC-SAT meetings, Ocean Science Trust has established the OPC-SAT as a conduit for bridging California to the broader scientific community, and a venue for engaged public discussion on how the scientific community can better inform the State.

Finally, the OST has leveraged state investments, and remains committed to seeking additional non-state funding to expand and extend OPC's investment in these projects.



**Monterey Bay
Aquarium**

886 CANNERY ROW
MONTEREY, CA 93940
831.648.4800

On behalf of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, we appreciate the OPC commitment to ocean conservation and its continued support of the Ocean Science Trust as Science Advisor and manager of the OPC-SAT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aimee David".

Aimee David
Ocean Conservation Policy Director