

CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

Staff Recommendation
December 7, 2016

Provision of Science and Science Communication Services

Deborah Halberstadt, Executive Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$445,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to provide science services and science communication services to the Ocean Protection Council.

LOCATION: Statewide

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE(S): Science-based decision-making

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: [Staff recommendation from June 2013](#) authorizing disbursement of up to \$5,700,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to facilitate the integration of science into state ocean resource management and support scientific monitoring of the state's marine protected areas (\$940,000 directed to science integration).

Exhibit B: [Staff recommendation from March 2011](#) authorizing disbursement of a total of \$2,780,000 to California Ocean Science Trust for Science Coordination and Statewide Marine Protected Area Monitoring (\$820,000 directed to science integration).

Exhibit C: [Staff recommendation from November 2008](#) authorizing disbursement of up to \$765,000 to California Ocean Science Trust provide high quality information to the OPC and other organizations related to critical ocean issues

Exhibit D: [Staff recommendation from February 2007](#) designating the Executive Director of the California Ocean Science Trust and authorizing the disbursement of up to \$200,000.

Exhibit E: [California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act](#)

Exhibit F: Support Letters

FINDINGS AND RESOLUTION:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibit(s), the Ocean Protection Council hereby finds that:

- 1) The proposed projects are consistent with the purposes of Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, the California Ocean Protection Act.
- 2) The proposed projects are consistent with the Ocean Protection Council's grant program funding guidelines (Interim Standards and Protocols, August 2013).
- 3) The proposed projects are not ‘legal projects’ that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21068 and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15378.”

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

“The California Ocean Protection Council hereby approves the disbursement of up to \$445,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to provide science services and science communication services to the Ocean Protection Council.”

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) was established by the Secretary of Resources pursuant to the California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act (CORSA, Public Resources Code §§36970-36995). As defined in CORSA, the OST’s mission includes:

1. Seeking funds for California ocean resource science projects, emphasizing the development of new funding sources.
2. Funding California ocean resource science projects that help fulfill the missions of the state’s ocean resource management agencies.
3. Encouraging coordinated, multiagency, multi-institution approaches to ocean resource science.
4. Encouraging graduate education programs in management-oriented ocean resource science in public and private universities and colleges in California.
5. Encouraging new technologies that reduce the cost, increase the amount, or improve the quality of ocean resource management information.
6. Promoting more effective coordination of California ocean resource science useful to management agencies.

In addition, the OST has provided scientific advice and assistance to the OPC. Pursuant to state legislation (AB 1056, 2007), OPC in 2007 created a science advisory team of distinguished scientists (OPC-SAT) to help it meet the purposes of the California Ocean Protection Act. At that time, OPC formally designated OST's Executive Director as the OPC Science Advisor, authorized the Science Advisor to oversee the creation of the OPC-SAT and serve as its co-chair, and granted \$200,000 to OST for such purposes.

Since then, OPC and OST have continued to partner to enable the state to utilize best available science in guiding policy development regarding ocean and coastal health. OPC has provided funding to OST totaling over \$11 million since 2006, approximately \$2.75 million of which has been for the provision of science integration services, including administering the OPC-SAT, providing science advice to the OPC, and producing scientific communication products for the OPC. During this same period, OST has raised \$7.65 million in private and federal funding in pursuit of the purposes set forth in CORSA; a portion (approximately \$2.83 million) of which has directly leveraged OPC's investment in science integration services.

Funding by OPC for OST's science services and science communications is currently set to expire on June 30, 2017. In order to continue provision of these services, OPC staff recommends that OPC disburse up to \$445,000 to OST between July 1, 2017 and February 28, 2019¹ for the activities delineated below.²

Work under this grant can be broken into two components: 1) science services and 2) science communication products. Outlined below are the metrics of success and expectations within the two components of science services and science communication.

Science services encompasses:

- Administration and facilitation of the OPC-SAT, including but not limited to:
 - Convening, in partnership with OPC staff and OPC-SAT Executive Committee, a two-day or single day semi-annual OPC-SAT meeting;
 - Work with the OPC-SAT to develop a presentation of emerging science issues for California's ocean and coast in the face of changing ocean conditions;
 - Coordinating and providing written material production assistance to the OPC-

¹ The funds being proposed for this authorization will revert or liquidate on June 30, 2019. Invoices for funds on a liquidation year must be received several months prior to the end of the fiscal year. Consequently, this staff recommendation extends only until February 2019. However, OPC staff intend to request a reappropriation of these funds, at which point the grant can be extended until June 30, 2019.

² Current funding outside the areas of science integration and science communication includes 8 grants totaling approximately \$2.5 million for activities including but not limited to assisting with marine protected area monitoring program management, ecological risk assessments for California fisheries, and identifying "hotspots" for ocean acidification and hypoxia.

SAT in the OPC-SAT's role of identifying, developing, and prioritizing subjects and questions for research and investigation;

- Convening monthly meetings of the OPC-SAT Executive Committee;
- Convening, administering, and facilitating OPC-SAT working groups at the request of the OPC or OPC staff, and providing document production reflecting the groups' work. There may be instances where OPC-SAT working groups necessitate a more intense and focused effort than the funding from this authorization will allow. In such cases, OST may seek funding under a separate grant agreement;
- Working with OPC staff on processes necessary to manage the OPC-SAT, including but not limited to filling vacancies and electing members of the OPC-SAT Executive Committee;
- Presenting the current priorities of the OPC-SAT at quarterly OPC meetings.
- Providing science advice and responsive scientific reporting
 - As requested by OPC, serving on key technical advisory meetings and using an established mechanism for reporting back to the OPC Executive Director and relevant OPC staff;
 - Aggregating existing science (i.e., literature reviews, peer reviews, and white papers) that address management priorities as requested by the OPC;
 - Facilitating the development of scientific consensus through either the OPC-SAT or scientific workshops.

Science communication products encompasses:

- Producing documents intended to synthesize various scientific information as requested by OPC (e.g. "snapshot" reports);
- Producing and distributing OPC-SAT and OST reports detailing annual activities, accomplishments and priorities in order to track progress and navigate future opportunities and project needs;
- Producing documents intended to quickly inform decision-makers or the public about technical products, projects, joint OST/OPC programs, or the OPC-SAT;
- Supporting and coordinating with OPC staff in efforts to highlight synergies between the OST, OPC-SAT and OPC on each entity's respective website, social media, outreach, and other public facing efforts.

Project Timeline:

Work will begin July 1, 2017 and conclude by February 28, 2019.

PROJECT GRANTEE:

OST is a nonprofit public-benefit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue

Code and was established pursuant to the California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act of 2000 to encourage coordinated, multi-agency, multi-institutional approaches to translating ocean science to management and policy applications. OST’s unique mission is to ensure that the best available science is provided to the OPC in order to ensure it is applied to California policies and ocean management to successfully maintain a healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coast. OST’s Board of Directors, designated by the Secretary of Natural Resources, is committed to broadening the organization’s funding base as intended under the founding legislation.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) authorize disbursement of up to \$445,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to provide science services and science communication services to the Ocean Protection Council.

Ocean Protection Council	\$445,000
TOTAL	\$445,000

The anticipated source of funds will be from the Ocean Protection Council’s appropriation of 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 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, as specified. The project is consistent with the Trust Fund purposes as discussed in the following section.

OST will continue to leverage the state’s investment to the greatest extent possible. OST will develop and share with OPC a business plan, with clear milestones and targets that demonstrates OST’s commitment and ability to leverage and diversify funds recognizing that OPC funding for OST is expected to decrease over time.

CONSISTENCY WITH CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION ACT:

The proposed project is consistent with the Ocean Protection Act, Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, because it is consistent with the purposes of the OPC including the transmission of the results of research and investigations to state agencies to provide information for policy decisions. (§65615(a)(5)). The proposed project is also consistent with trust-fund allowable projects, defined in Public Resources Code Section 35650(b)(2)(f) as projects which improve management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean

ecosystems.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE OPC'S STRATEGIC PLAN:

These projects implement Focal Area A: Science-based Decision-Making. Specifically, the Strategic Plan calls out Objective 3.1: "Promote and encourage the institutional support, capacity, and leadership role of the OPC-SAT and harness the substantial scientific expertise within California and beyond to inform policy and management decisions."

CONSISTENCY WITH PROPOSITION 84 (The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006; Public Resources Code §75060(g))

This project implements a provision within Proposition 84 specific to OPC funding that allows this bond-funded grant program to expend funds on the "development of scientific data needed to adaptively manage the state's marine resources."

CONSISTENCY WITH THE OPC'S GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the OPC's Grant Program Funding Guidelines for Proposition 84 funds, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. Directly relate to the ocean, coast, associated estuaries, or coastal-draining watersheds: The science and science communication services will ensure science is informing California policy and management in order to maintain a healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coast for the benefit of current and future generations.
2. Support of the public: The proposed authorization is supported by numerous entities. Please see the letters of support as an exhibit to this staff recommendation.
3. Greater-than-local interest: These projects are state-wide in scope as the OPC-SAT and the OPC science advisory roles provide advice on various issues across the state.

Additional Criteria

4. Improvements to management approaches or techniques: The provision of science and science communication services continue as a fairly novel approach by promoting coordination between scientists and state agencies, and integrating science into decision-making.
5. Resolution of more than one issue: This work will identify science priorities and needs, provide relevant information to address management questions and integrate science into decision-making.
6. Timeliness or Urgency: Current funding, approved by the Council in 2013, will no longer be available in the latter half of 2017. In order for the OPC to continue to benefit from these services, a new authorization is needed from the Council.

7. Coordination: This work will involve and improve coordination among scientists, policy makers, and resource managers.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed projects are not 'legal projects' that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21068 and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15378.