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October 23, 2018

John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources, Council Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Comments on OPC Meeting Agenda Items – Thursday, October 25, 2018

Dear Secretary Laird and Council members:

Given the extremely full agenda at the October 2018 OPC meeting in Santa Cruz, please accept these written comments from Ocean Conservancy on a number of the agenda items in lieu of public comments at the meeting.

We have comments on Agenda Items 4-8 (see below) but first we wish to acknowledge the tremendous leadership provided by Deborah Halberstadt and the entire OPC staff in their successful efforts to ensure that the ocean and coasts featured prominently at Governor Brown's Global Climate Action Summit. For the first time, the ocean was a central part of the discussion at an international climate change conference. OPC's leadership was critical to the development of the "Ocean Climate Action Agenda," a visionary document that articulated a set of goals and objectives around which summit presenters and attendees alike could rally. Ocean Conservancy is proud to have worked closely with the OPC and our ocean colleagues on the development of this document and the resulting ocean panels that took place during this historic event in San Francisco. Momentum is now building to ensure the ocean is closely integrated into other international climate forums and policy vehicles such as COP 24 this December and COP 25 in November 2019. We strongly encourage the OPC to engage in these events and to share the lessons learned in California on ocean and climate with other subnational and national entities. Ocean Conservancy stands ready to assist the state in these efforts.

Agenda Item 4

We support the proposed resolutions regarding MPAs reflected in item 4. This workplan will help the state continue its leadership on MPAs (4a), and we support the state's focus on monitoring actions (4b). Given the New York Times article this week¹ on how

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/22/climate/kelp-climate-change-california.html>

warm water, reduced upwelling and seastar disease are compounding to undermine California kelp forests, monitoring and research will grow ever more important as climate change proceeds along the coast.

Agenda Item 5

Ocean Conservancy is strongly supportive of agenda item 5a, California's Ocean Acidification Action Plan and we recommend that the Council adopt it as written. Ocean Conservancy has long been supportive of state action in California on OA (including sponsoring AB 2139, Williams) and submitted comments on the OA Action Plan on August 30, 2018. The Action Plan fulfills one of California's obligations to the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification and is likely to serve as a model for other jurisdictions looking to take concrete actions to confront ocean acidification. Ocean Conservancy is especially pleased that the OA action plan acknowledges the role of other climate and non-climate driven stressors and has identified a suite of actions in light of these other ocean stressors. As a result, this Action Plan, while focused largely on mitigation and management actions for ocean and coastal systems, lays the groundwork for future actions that look beyond OA to the myriad of ways that carbon pollution and climate change are affecting California's ocean.

We recommend that OPC turn next to development of a work plan and budget for spending new resources from the Environmental License Plate Fund and Prop 68, consistent with the OA Action Plan, and developing a complementary work plan for advancing coastal resilience priorities in consultation with the coastal management agencies and the conservation community.

Agenda Items 5-8

Ocean Conservancy is also pleased to see a wide range of cutting edge research projects proposed for disbursement of Prop. 84 funding in agenda items 5-8. Each is designed to provide additional, actionable information on issues of importance to the state, and we are supportive of all the disbursements. In particular, the projects that address 1) domoic acid (5b3), 2) multiple stressors and impacts on pseudo-nitzschia (8a2), 3) geography of ocean acidification stress (5b4), 4) synergistic effects of OA and warming (5b6), 5) effect of MPAs on fisheries and fishery management (6a4), and 6) plastics and seafood safety (8a4) are especially important to the future health of California's ocean and coast and the services they provide our state's residents.

Agenda Item 8

Finally, Ocean Conservancy is especially supportive of item 8b, a Proposition 1 project to support the City of Newport Beach's efforts to establish the Newport Bay Water Wheel Project. Marine debris, and especially plastic pollution, is a major threat to ocean health, with nearly 8 MMT of plastics flowing into the world's ocean yearly². A central solution to this problem lies in preventing debris from entering the ocean in the first

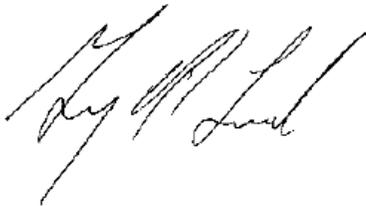
² Jambeck et al. (2015). Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean. *Science* 347(6223):768-771

place. The Baltimore Water Wheel has proven to be a cost effective, highly efficient means to intercept large debris in freshwater streams, long before these materials find their way into the central ocean gyres. With its creative design, "Mr. Trash Wheel" has also played a major role in public education about the issue of plastics pollution more generally. By targeting water quality and watershed protection, the Newport Bay project is fully aligned with the goals and objectives of Proposition 1.

Lastly, Ocean Conservancy wants to acknowledge and thank Secretary Laird and Secretary Rodriguez for their years of service under Governor Jerry Brown's administration on behalf of our ocean and coast through their tireless efforts on behalf of the Ocean Protection Council. As the state moves toward new leadership in 2019, your partnership with Governor Brown to highlight the value of a healthy ocean to all Californians is to be commended.

From all of us at Ocean Conservancy, we thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George H. Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

George H. Leonard, Ph.D.
Chief Scientist