Exhibit B

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

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May 10, 2019

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

RE: Support for California Ocean Science Trust as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory Team

Dear Secretary Crowfoot and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is working to support collaborative and innovative solutions that promote thriving, sustainable fisheries and healthy coastal and marine ecosystems in the face of climate change. The California Ocean Science Trust has similarly demonstrated its commitment to advancing conservation and sustainability of our state's marine resources. As such, we are writing to express our strong support for the continued role of the California Ocean Science Trust (OST) as Science Advisor to the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory Team (OPC SAT).

Addressing global challenges such as ocean acidification and sea-level rise requires interdisciplinary science to inform innovative, effective, and policy-relevant paths moving forward. The collaborative partnership between OST, OPC, and the OPC SAT is unique to California and serves as an effective model for science-informed policy.

The OST has served as OPC Science Advisor since 2008 and has continued to play a critical role in delivering pragmatic and actionable science advice to OPC. As a non-profit partner to the state, OST has exceled at leveraging multiple funding sources to amplify return on state investments and implementing nimble responses to address state priorities and needs.

Durable conservation and management solutions also require broad input. The OST serves as a trusted nexus between managers, scientists, and stakeholders to bring together the diversity of perspectives. This decade-long relationship demonstrates the state's strong commitment to soliciting independent scientific advice, where OST has played a key role in engaging and mobilizing the scientific community, citizens, NGOs, and other partners on behalf of OPC's most pressing priorities.

TNC looks forward to continuing to work with OPC and OST to support collaborative research and develop science-based solutions to promote long-term conservation and management of California's marine and coastal resources under a changing ocean conditions. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Tom Dempsey
California Oceans Program Director
The Nature Conservancy

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

May 9, 2019

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

Re: Support for California Ocean Science Trust as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory Team

Dear Secretary Crowfoot and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) for the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) staff recommendation for $650,000 in funding to OST to serve as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory team.

As a present member of your Science Advisory Team, and as a former Governing Board member of the Ocean Science Trust, I have observed how OST has added value to the OPC in delivering pragmatic and actionable science advice. 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 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

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May 10, 2019

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

Re: Support for California Ocean Science Trust as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory Team

Dear Secretary Crowfoot and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

As the Executive Committee of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC SAT), we are writing on behalf of the OPC-SAT to offer our support for the staff recommendation to disburse up to $650,000 in funding to California Ocean Science Trust to serve as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC SAT.

The State Legislature called upon the OPC in 2007 to create "a science advisory team of distinguished scientists" to help it meet the purposes of the California Ocean Protection Act (AB 1056, 2007). To fulfill this mandate, the OPC designated the Ocean Science Trust as its Science Advisor, and subsequently directed the Science Advisor to convene and serve as co-chair of what ultimately became the OPC SAT.

The mission of the OPC SAT is to ensure that the best available science supports OPC funding decisions and policy development. We work as a group of volunteers to fulfill this mission by providing the OPC with the best available scientific advice and guidance and by serving as a conduit to the extensive expertise available in the broader scientific community. Ocean Science Trust provides services that are critical to the successful functioning of the OPC SAT – services that would not otherwise be possible to provide given the volunteer nature of our body. Ocean Science Trust is not only the OPC SAT's support structure – providing much needed staff assistance, coordination, and facilitation – but as Secretariat, OST also provides essential governance oversight and external representation.

Over the course of the last decade, we have witnessed the impact and relevance of the OPC SAT grow substantially. We have brought scientific advice and guidance to a wide array of OPC priority issues, including sea-level rise, ocean acidification and hypoxia, and sustainable fisheries management. Our successes would not have been possible without the active guidance and assistance of Ocean Science Trust.

Ocean Science Trust also helps the OPC-SAT to understand decision-makers' needs and goals and to identify and develop the most appropriate tools for communicating scientific findings. Whether it is empaneling a team of scientists, forming a working group, conducting scientific peer review, or offering more informal scientific advice and consultation, Ocean Science Trust's collaborative approach is essential to keeping OPC-SAT members engaged and supported. Ocean Science Trust also plays a critical function in designing and implementing the processes for OPC SAT initiatives in ways that balance decision-makers' needs while protecting the scientists and the science from political interference.

The science-to-decision-making structure in place through Ocean Science Trust and OPC-SAT

collaboration has served OPC well and demonstrates California's strong commitment to independent scientific advice and guidance. We applaud the OPC for its continued support of Ocean Science Trust as Science Advisor and Secretariat to the OPC SAT.

We look forward to continuing to work with OPC and Ocean Science Trust to strengthen the role and utility of the OPC-SAT in linking science with ocean and coastal decision-making across California.

Sincerely,

Gretchen E. Hofmann
OPC-SAT Executive Co-Chair

Jay Stachowicz
OPC-SAT Co-Chair Emeritus

Madeleine Hall-Arber
OPC-SAT Executive Co-chair

CALIFORNIA
OCEAN SCIENCE TRUST

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University of Southern California

Dr. Karina Nielsen, *Ex-Officio, OPC-SAT Liaison*
Professor and Director, Estuary & Ocean Science Center, San Francisco State University

May 10, 2019

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

Re: OPC Science Advisor, including OPC SAT Secretariat

Dear Secretary Crowfoot and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

As Chair of the Ocean Science Trust Board of Trustees, I am writing on behalf of the full board to express our appreciation for your consideration of continued support for the Ocean Science Trust to serve as OPC Science Advisor.

Today, the partnership between OPC, OST, and the science advisory team (OPC SAT) is as strong as it has ever been. Together we have led the nation in responding to global challenges such as ocean acidification and sea-level rise, demonstrating the value of interdisciplinary science in shaping effective and policy-relevant paths forward.

With renewed engagement with California's academic community - across both University of California and California State University campuses and beyond - we are committed to providing the scientific syntheses, recommendations and reasoned advice needed for California. As Secretariat to the OPC SAT, we are proud to have played a leading role in convening a multidisciplinary team of distinguished and independent scientists to support OPC in science-based actions and decisions.

As a nonprofit partner to the state we will continue to seek opportunities for rapid response to state priorities, to build innovative science partnerships, and to amplify state investments with external funding. We look forward to continuing to work with OPC and the science advisory team to find solutions to pressing challenges, and accelerate progress towards a healthy and productive ocean future for California.

Sincerely,

Nancy Sutley, Chair

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May 12, 2019

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

Re: Support for California Ocean Science Trust as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory Team

Dear Secretary Crowfoot and members of the Ocean Protection Council,

Please accept this letter of support for the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) staff recommendation for $650,000 in funding to OST to serve as OPC Science Advisor, including Secretariat to the OPC Science Advisory team.

This letter of support reflects my experience collaborating with OST to advance scientific recommendations for effective marine protected area management, sustainable fisheries management, climate adaptation strategies, ocean acidification and more. I also serve as liaison to the Ocean Science Trust Board of Trustees providing a formal link between OST and California State University and the OPC Science Advisory Team.

With support to serve as OPC Science Advisor, OST is poised to strengthen the engagement of the academic community - across the California State University and University of California campuses - on state priorities, including:

- Increasing social science and economic capacity applied to state priorities
- Aligning graduate education programs with state science needs
- Fostering mechanisms to increase diversity and inclusion in ocean sciences

Strengthening the institutions in place and fostering unique interdisciplinary science partnerships will be essential to address the damaging impacts of a changing climate. I

applaud OPC for its commitment to science-informed decision making and collaborative approach and urge support for OST to continue to serve as OPC Science Advisor.

Sincerely,

Karina J. Nielsen, PhD
Executive Director, Estuary and Ocean Science Center
Professor, Department of Biology