

**OCEAN
PROTECTION
COUNCIL**

**Ocean Protection Council
Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program
Grant Proposal Solicitation and Application Instructions**

PRE-PROPOSAL DUE NOVEMBER 30, 2018

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I. Application Information and Instructions

A. Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) was created by law in 2004 via the California Ocean Protection Act. OPC works to ensure that California maintains healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coastal ecosystems for the benefit of future generations and is committed to ensuring that policy and management decisions affecting California's coastal and ocean resources are based on the best available science.

The State Water Resources Control Board established the statewide "Water Quality Control Policy on the Use of Coastal and Estuarine Waters for Power Plant Cooling" ([Policy](#))¹ in 2010 requiring power generating facilities to stop using once-through cooling (OTC) technology. The Policy requires that mitigation payments assessed against power plants for use of OTC technology support "mitigation projects directed toward increases in marine life associated with the state's marine protected areas in the geographic region of the facility." The Policy directed OPC to develop and implement the Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program (Program). OPC and the State Water Resources Control Board entered into a [Memorandum of Understanding](#)² that allocates \$5.4 million of the annual payments to mitigate the impacts of OTC on California's Marine Protected Area (MPA) Network.

The Ocean Protection Council approved the Program's [Award Guidelines](#)³ on October 25, 2018. The Award Guidelines establish the high-level process and criteria that OPC will use to solicit competitive applications, evaluate and select proposals, and distribute awards using OTC interim mitigation funds, consistent with the Policy and with the Program's priorities as defined in Section 1.2 of the Award Guidelines.

In order to offset the negative impacts of OTC on coastal environments and increase marine life consistent with the Policy, California's MPAs must be ecologically functioning as a network, which requires effective MPA management. OPC's Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program prioritizes mitigation payment investment through four categories to ensure effective management of the MPA network:

- Enforcement of MPA regulations statewide
- Outreach and education to improve compliance of MPA regulations statewide
- Research to establish and quantify the expected ecological benefits of the MPA Network and understand what additional mitigation may be required to offset OTC impacts
- Restoration that increases marine life in the geographic region of the facility

This solicitation is for restoration projects that increase marine life in the geographic region of the facility, though projects may include elements that address the other three priorities.

Please note: applicants must submit a pre-proposal by November 30, 2018 to be eligible for consideration.

This solicitation provides detailed expectations and instructions on how to submit the pre-proposal. This solicitation also provides an overview of what applicants can expect to prepare for the full proposal; however,

¹ https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ocean/cwa316/docs/otcpolicy_2017.pdf

² http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/media_library/2016/10/Compressed_Acceptance-Use-of-Interim-Mitigation-Funds-for-the-Once-Through-Coolin.pdf

³ http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/media_library/2018/10/OTCAwardGuidelines_OceanProtectionCouncil_FINAL.pdf

full proposal questions and templates will only be provided to applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal.

Please review the [Award Guidelines](#) as well as this solicitation document thoroughly before proceeding with the grant application process.

B. Application Process

Applications must be completed online through the California Natural Resources Agency's System for Online Application Review ([SOAR](#))⁴.

When using SOAR, please note the following:

- SOAR is an internet-based system, and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- It is recommended that you:
 - Use a PC and Internet Explorer (6.0 or higher). **SOAR IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH ANY NON-PC PRODUCTS (MAC, ETC.) OR ANY WEB SOFTWARE EXCEPT INTERNET EXPLORER (FIREFOX, CHROME, ETC. WILL NOT WORK).**
 - Disable pop-up blocking software while using SOAR.
 - **Save work often** – the system will time out after 60 minutes of activity.

Applicants should review the SOAR [User Manual](#)⁵ and SOAR [FAQ](#)⁶ before beginning the online application in SOAR.

Applications must be completed through the following steps:

1. Carefully review the Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program Award Guidelines and this solicitation document.
2. Respond to questions online in SOAR. All of the questions for the pre-proposal phase that will be on the SOAR online application can also be found in Section II of this document.
3. Download relevant templates from the [Program webpage](#)⁷, complete them, and upload them as Attachments in the SOAR online system using the electronic file naming convention provided in the Application Checklist.
4. Use the Application Checklist available on the Program webpage to ensure completion of all required application components for the pre-proposal phase.

All relevant Program documents, including forms required for the online application process, can be found on the Program's webpage: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/once-through-cooling-interim-mitigation-program/>

⁴ <https://soar.resources.ca.gov/>

⁵ http://resources.ca.gov/grants/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SOAR_UserManual.pdf

⁶ <http://resources.ca.gov/grants/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SOARFAQs.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.opc.ca.gov/once-through-cooling-interim-mitigation-program/>

C. Competitive Project Solicitation Schedule for 2018-2019

The Program ensures that proposals are reviewed with fairness and transparency. An overview of the competitive award process is presented in the diagram below, followed by a schedule for this round of project solicitation. Each step is explained in more detail in Sections 2.3 – 2.9 of the Award Guidelines.



Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program Competitive Project Solicitation Schedule for 2018-2019	
Request for Proposals released	November 1, 2018
Informational webinar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Program webpage for more details • A recording of the webinar will be posted on the webpage that can be viewed at any time • Webinar attendance is recommended but not mandatory 	November 8, 2018 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Pre-proposal due	November 30, 2018
Applicants receive notification on whether they are invited to submit full proposal	No later than December 28, 2018
Full proposal due	February 1, 2019
Proposals evaluated	February – April 2019
Applicants receive notification on whether project has been selected	April 15, 2019
Select proposals recommended to Ocean Protection Council for approval	May 15, 2019
Approved projects finalize work plans and financial paperwork (work can begin once completed)	Summer 2019

D. Concept Consultation

Applicants may consult with the Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program Manager during the project solicitation period prior to submitting their applications. Concept consultation will be available to any potential applicant but is not required. The Program Manager will be available to discuss concepts, projects, and proposal-related questions, but will not be able to review the pre-proposal or full proposal before they are submitted.

To request a consultation, please contact:

Tova Handelman, Marine Protected Areas Program Manager

Tova.Handelman@resources.ca.gov

(916) 653-9486

E. Eligible Projects

The Award Guidelines describe project and applicant eligibility (Sections 1.4 – 1.9). **This solicitation requests proposals for restoration projects that meet the criteria in Section 2.6.** Proposals must demonstrate that the projected outcomes increase marine life associated with the state’s marine protected areas within the geographic region of the facility, as defined in Section 1.3. Proposals must also clearly demonstrate relevance to and addresses specific recommendations of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) [report](#)⁸ entitled “Ocean Restoration Methods: Scientific Guidance for Once-Through Cooling Mitigation Policy”. Projects that address water quality issues must show direct long-term benefits to MPAs in the geographic region. Projects must be ready to start work upon approval and be completed by February 2024. Projects that have a duration longer than 2024 may be considered; however, the applicant must propose a phased approach with discrete deliverables to achieve project completion and be aware that funding for subsequent phases will be contingent on budget approval in future years. Please contact the OTC Program Manager to discuss options.

Proposals must demonstrate that the project is at a scale that provides a measurable impact to the density, diversity, biomass, and function of one or more of the following ecosystems:

- Rocky intertidal
- Kelp and shallow rock (0-30m)
- Mid-depth rock (30-100m)
- Deep ecosystems and canyons (>100m)
- Soft bottom subtidal (0-100m)
- Nearshore pelagic
- Estuaries and wetlands

Monitoring and Data Collection

Proposals must include a monitoring and reporting component that explains how the effectiveness of the project will be measured and reported. The plan should include a list of project specific performance measures that will be used to assess project outcomes/trajectories, and should provide sufficient detail of how these performance measures will be quantified and assessed to allow an evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed action(s) at achieving the stated objectives. Proposals must also include a description of the processes through which data will be collected, stored, managed in the long term if applicable, and disseminated to participants, stakeholders, the public, and the State. Data may include, but are not limited to, technical

⁸ <http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/OST-Ocean-Restoration-Methods-Final-HighRes.pdf>

information such as designs, feasibility studies, reports, and information gathered for a specific project in any phase of development including the planning, design, construction, operation, and monitoring of a project.

All products and data will be required to be uploaded to the California Natural Resources Agency [Open Data Platform](#)⁹. If alternate methods are going to be used that do not allow the integration of data into existing statewide systems, a thorough explanation of the reason for this is required. After funding is awarded, the OTC Program Manager will work with awardees to develop appropriate monitoring and reporting templates and procedures. See Section 3 of the Award Guidelines for more information and project requirements.

Geographic Region of the Facilities

Projects must take place within the geographic region of the facilities, as defined by the OPC-SAT Working Group. The Working Group determined that due to oceanographic currents connecting locations both inside and outside of MPAs, harmful effects of once-through cooling extend 100 kilometers north and 100 kilometers south from a power plant's intake pipe. Given the geographic extent of power plants still using once-through cooling, the findings of this report define the areas impacted as the **entirety of State waters (3 nautical miles from the coastline) from San Diego to Big Sur coast (near Lucia), including the waters around the Channel Islands and wetlands and estuaries within that region**. Figure 2 below¹⁰ (also found on page 5 of the Award Guidelines) is a map of the areas of impact that defines the geographic region of the ten power plant facilities that are currently operating under the interim mitigation requirements of the Policy.

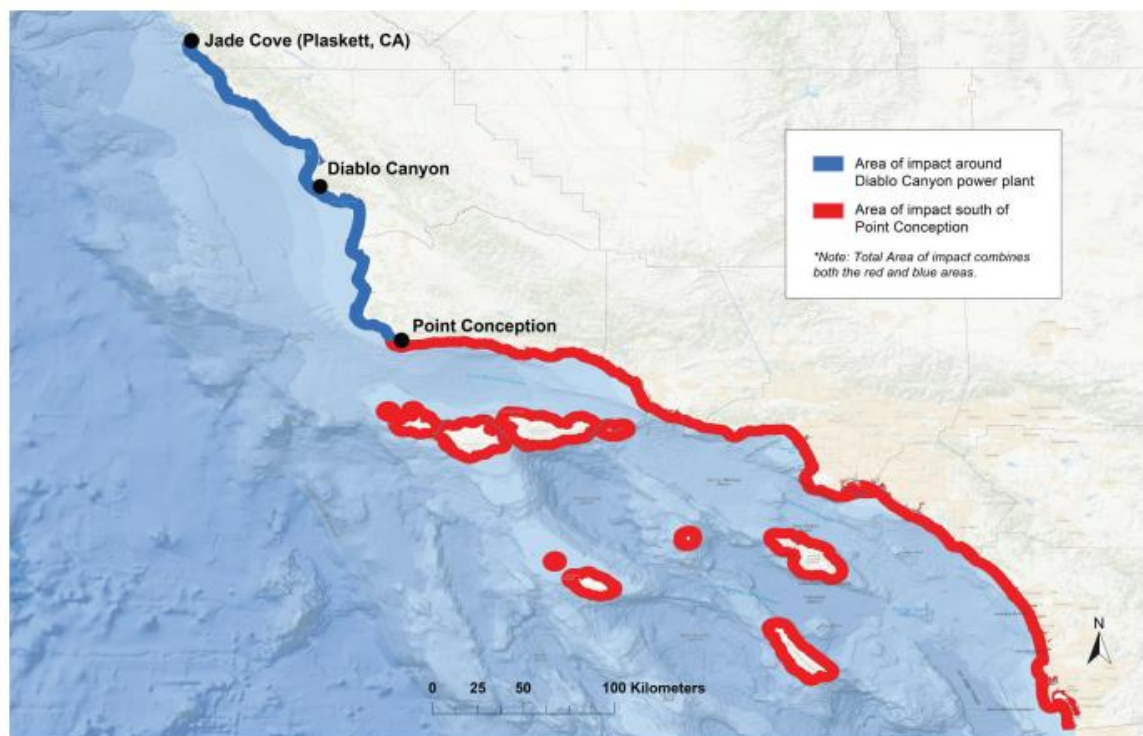


Figure 2. The areas of impact for the ten power plants complying with the interim mitigation requirements of the OTC Policy (red areas and blue area combined).

⁹ <https://data.cnra.ca.gov/>

¹⁰ Ambrose, R., Raimondi, P., Anderson, S., Baskett, M., Caselle, J., Carr, M., Edwards, C., Kent, M., Nickols, K., Ramanujam, E., Reyns, N., and Stier, A. (California Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team Working Group). Ocean Restoration Methods: Scientific Guidance for Once-Through Cooling Mitigation Policy. California Ocean Science Trust, Oakland, CA. June 2018. <http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/OST-Ocean-Restoration-Methods-Final-HighRes.pdf>

Eligible Planning Activities

At the discretion of OPC, eligible planning activities that will lead to the successful design and implementation of projects may be included in an award. Such activities may include project development, implementation strategy development, watershed assessments, and project-specific activities such as design and baseline data collection.

F. Ineligible Projects

Projects that will **not** be funded by this Program include, but are not limited to:

- **Projects that create manipulations inside an MPA, or otherwise cause “take” of any kind as defined by the [Marine Life Protection Act](#)¹¹, will not be allowed** without appropriate proof of permission by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and other federal, state, and local regulatory agencies as needed.
- Projects requesting funding to implement mitigation projects that an agency, organization, or company is mandated to complete.
- Projects taking place outside of the geographic region of the facilities.
- Projects focused solely on planning.
- Costs associated with environmental permitting are not eligible. Projects must comply with applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other environmental permitting requirements. The applicant is responsible for receiving and fulfilling all permitting requirements. (See Section 1.8 of the Award Guidelines.)

G. Applicant Eligibility

Funds can be awarded to public agencies (including local, state, and federal), public or private universities, nonprofit organizations, private entities, federally recognized tribes, and California Native American tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission’s California Tribal Consultation List. Nonprofit organizations must be a 501 (c)(3) as verified by the Internal Revenue Service.

The applicant must demonstrate that it can adequately administer the ongoing management and operation of the project, and that its entire operating budget is not dependent upon the underlying award. The applicant should address the following organizational capacity and expertise elements, including but not limited to:

- Capacity to manage a state award, including the ability to clearly document accounting activities and having staff dedicated to tracking and reporting financial operations associated with the award.
- Ability to address cash flow processing of reimbursement payments, as OPC will not directly advance any funds. Awards under this Program are paid in arrears and there are restrictions on the types of expenses that can be claimed. All expenses are paid on a reimbursement basis within 45 days of receiving a properly submitted Request for Disbursement and its associated invoice, receipts, and other required documentation (see Section 2.9 of the Award Guidelines).
- Proof of qualified staff or contractors to carry out the project activities.
- A history of success in completing similar projects.

¹¹ <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/MLPA>

- The applicant's governance structure, with institutional history and any operating laws or procedures, and the commitment to see the project to completion.

H. California Native Tribes and Tribal Governments

OPC recognizes the need for the involvement of, and when appropriate, consultation with California Tribes and Tribal Governments regarding projects, especially those that occur in areas of traditional use. As such, applicants should make every effort to involve California Tribes and Tribal Governments as appropriate.

I. Environmental Documents and Permitting

OPC is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Applicants should consider whether their proposed project will require an environmental impact report, negative declaration, or whether a CEQA exemption applies. How CEQA applies and the status of CEQA compliance must be addressed in the application. Projects must also comply with applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other environmental permitting requirements. The applicant is responsible for receiving and fulfilling all permitting requirements. The applicant is solely responsible for project compliance.

No project will be approved until the necessary environmental permitting is complete, and OPC reserves the right to require modification to the design, to require additional mitigation, and to ultimately find the project is not consistent with the Program, and therefore remove it from the list of potentially eligible proposals for funding.

J. Minimum and Maximum Award Amounts

This solicitation is for \$3,400,000. **The minimum award amount is \$500,000.** As sub-awards are allowed, it is highly recommended that applicants with projects under \$500,000 collaborate with others to create a larger proposal and apply as a coalition with one defined administrative lead. Applicants are encouraged to discuss potential small projects with OPC staff in advance of submittal. **The maximum award amount is \$3,400,000, though to encourage a selection of diverse projects that address current needs, it is unlikely that a single award will receive all of the funds available in this solicitation.**

K. Projects that Benefit Disadvantaged Communities

OPC strongly encourages projects benefitting "disadvantaged communities" as defined by California Water Code §79505.5a: "Disadvantaged community is a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income." To determine whether a project is located within or near a disadvantaged community, please use the CalEnviroScreen map viewer¹² and/or the California ARB map viewer showing designations as per SB 535 and AB 1550.¹³ All applications will be evaluated with the same criteria as listed in Section 2.6, including points directed to projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. Applicants should state the project's geographical proximity to specific disadvantaged communities and clearly demonstrate how the project directly benefits those communities. Funds may be used to increase applicant capacity, and the applicant must demonstrate how the funds will be allocated to ensure the applicant can meet the criteria discussed in Section 1.7 of the Award Guidelines.

¹² <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen>

¹³ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/lowincomemapfull.htm>

II. Phase 1: Pre-Proposal

Applicants must submit a pre-proposal on SOAR by 5:00PM on November 30, 2018 to be eligible to submit a full proposal. The pre-proposal is intended to be an outline of the proposed project and should be submitted by answering the questions in the SOAR template. Please note that there are character limits for each question. The Excel template provided on the Program webpage for the cost estimate and timeline should be uploaded in the Attachments tab on SOAR. The Project Permit/Approval Status template and proof of any applicable permits should be uploaded in the Attachments tab on SOAR. **You may not upload any other graphs, images, or appendices.**

Pre-proposals will not be scored. OPC will review the pre-proposals to check that proposed projects meet eligibility requirements listed in Section 2.6 of the Award Guidelines. OPC may consult with members of the expert review committee, or other experts and partners as deemed necessary. OPC will notify applicants on whether or not they are invited to submit a full proposal no later than December 28, 2018. OPC may ask that applicants amend parts of their proposal to submit a full proposal. Full proposals will be evaluated and scored according to the criteria in Section 2.6 of the Award Guidelines. Scoring information of all proposals will remain confidential.

Template for Pre-proposal

A template with the questions for the pre-proposal can be found on the [Program's webpage](#)¹⁴.

IMPORTANT: Each question must be answered in the appropriate text box within the character limit required in SOAR. It is highly recommended that applicants prepare responses in advance in the template or a word processing program, and then cut and paste responses into the relevant response boxes. SOAR cannot accept bullets or other formatting. Applicants should hit SAVE regularly to save work on the SOAR application.

Project Description

1. Describe the question, problem, or need that will be addressed and how the project will address the need. Include the history of the project and all phases completed to date, if applicable. Describe how the project is based in the best available scientific information. (4000 characters)
2. Identify how the project aligns with the Policy to increase marine life associated with marine protected areas in the geographic region of the facility, as defined in Section 1.3 of the Award Guidelines. Identify how the project addresses specific recommendations of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) [report](#)¹⁵ entitled "Ocean Restoration Methods: Scientific Guidance for Once-Through Cooling Mitigation Policy". (2000 characters)
3. Identify the geographic scope of the project. GPS coordinates can be included if available. Include a brief site description. (1000 characters)
4. Describe the applicant's affiliation (i.e. non-profit, government, etc.), the main role/mission of the applicant's organization and how it pertains to the proposed project, and a brief overview of the applicant's proven capacity to adequately administer the ongoing management and operation of the project. (1000 characters)
5. Identify who will benefit from this project. Describe local or regional partnerships, collaborations, and support that will be used to achieve the project's goals, if applicable. (1000 characters)

¹⁴ <http://www.opc.ca.gov/once-through-cooling-interim-mitigation-program/>

¹⁵ <http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/OST-Ocean-Restoration-Methods-Final-HighRes.pdf>

Objectives

1. Describe the specific measurable outcomes of the project and other deliverables and briefly describe the methods and activities that will take place to achieve the desired outcomes. (4000 characters)

Cost Estimate and Timeline (template provided on Program webpage)

- Estimate the expenses needed to carry out the project to your best ability. Consider the following expenditure categories:
 - Personnel
 - Equipment and supplies
 - Travel
 - Consultants or subcontractors
 - Administrative overhead, capped at 15% (except for UC and CSU, which are capped at the currently negotiated rate)
 - Other expenditures as needed
- Indicate if any matching or partial funds have been or will be secured from other sources.
- Describe the important milestones needed to carry out the project, including their estimated dates and the task's overall completion date. Dates can be specific if known (i.e. December 30, 2022) or a general target date (i.e. December 2022, winter 2022, etc.). Applicant must demonstrate that project will be ready to begin upon approval and be completed by February 2024.

Project Permit/Approval Status and Proof of Applicable Permits (template provided on Program webpage)

- Use the Project Permit/Approval Status template to disclose what permits are required, including those for compliance with CEQA and NEPA, and provide proof that the permits have been obtained. Attach proof of permits with the Project Permit/Approval Status template in **one PDF document**.
- If your project does not require any permits, write N/A in the "date anticipated" column.

III. Phase 2: Full Proposal

Applicants invited to submit a full proposal must submit a detailed scope of work, schedule, and budget for the project in response to the questions posted on SOAR. Applicants are required to use the provided application template, which will be made available only to applicants invited to submit a full proposal. The full proposal will require a complete description of the project, including but not limited to:

- Detailed description of the proposed scope of work, including long-term results and outcomes.
- Project schedule with explicit task completion dates, including a clear depiction of timing of project phases and components.
- Budget that is tied directly to the explicit task list that includes estimated rates, hours, equipment, and potential sub-contractors.
- Resumes or Curriculum Vitae of principal investigators or contractors, including previous projects that reflect sufficient aptitude in the project's focal area.
- Review of all environmental compliance and permitting requirements. (Section 1.8 of the Award Guidelines)
- Plans for monitoring and reporting the project. (Section 3.1 of the Award Guidelines)
- Letters of support both from within and outside the community where the project will take place.
- Consistency with, and a description of, how the proposed project aligns with the Policy to increase marine life associated with marine protected areas in the geographic region of the facility.

Applicants must submit a complete full proposal by 5:00PM on February 1, 2019 or they will not be evaluated for funding. Proposals will be reviewed for completeness by OPC staff to ensure that all submission criteria are met before being sent to a review committee. Proposals that do not meet all submission criteria and/or are incomplete will be rejected. Rejected proposals are not precluded from applying in future solicitations.

IV. Contact Information

Please check the [Program webpage](http://www.opc.ca.gov/once-through-cooling-interim-mitigation-program/) regularly for the most recent updates. (<http://www.opc.ca.gov/once-through-cooling-interim-mitigation-program/>)

If you have any further questions, please contact:

Tova Handelman, Marine Protected Areas Program Manager

Tova.Handelman@resources.ca.gov

(916) 653-9486

If you are experiencing difficulties with SOAR, please contact the SOAR Help Desk.

The SOAR Help Desk is staffed Monday - Friday (9:00 AM - 4:00 PM).

SOAR.ADMIN@resources.ca.gov

(916) 653-6138