

June 10, 2005

TO: California Ocean Protection Council

FROM: Sam Schuchat, Secretary to the Council

RE: Adoption of Interim Funding, Project Selection, and Application Guidelines (Agenda Item #6B)

Requested Action

Staff recommends that the council adopt the following resolution:

“The California Ocean Protection Council adopts the attached *Interim Funding, Project Selection, and Application Guidelines* to be used in selecting projects and activities to be considered for support by the council.”

Background

In the California Ocean Protection Act the Legislature makes the following findings and declarations:

“Good governance and stewardship of ocean resources necessitate more efficient and effective use of public funds”.

“The state needs to coordinate governance and stewardship of the state’s ocean, to identify priorities, bridge existing gaps, and ensure effective and scientifically sound approaches to protecting and conserving the most important ocean resources”.

The act charges the council with coordinating:

“activities of state agencies, that are related to the protection and conservation of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems, to improve effectiveness of state efforts to protect ocean resources within existing fiscal limitations...”

The act appoints the executive officer of the State Coastal Conservancy, under the direction of the Secretary for Resources, to act as secretary to the council, to administer its affairs, and provide staff to administer grants and expenditures authorized by the council.

The act establishes the California Ocean Protection Trust Fund. The act also sets out a series of projects or activities for which the fund may be used upon authorization of the council.

The Legislature has appropriated ten million dollars to the Resources Agency from tidelands oil revenues, that is expected to be available for expenditure for the council's priorities during the 2005/2006 fiscal year.

The Legislature has appropriated funds to the State Coastal Conservancy, as well as other State departments, that may be used for coastal and ocean related projects and related activities. At its May 18th meeting the Conservancy unanimously voted to reserve five million dollars for the purposes of the council. Other departments are expected to make similar reservations of funds or otherwise allocate money for ocean protection under the council's direction.

Purpose and Effect

Staff is proposing that the council adopt the attached *Interim Funding, Project Selection, and Application Guidelines* (guidelines) for the following purposes:

- To guide staff in selecting specific projects or activities to be brought before the council for funding or other support;
- To guide potential project sponsors in determining if their proposals may be consistent with the council's priorities;
- To establish a procedure for initial review of proposals;
- To establish initial priorities for the council, based on the Ocean Protection Act, that may be used by state departments in establishing related funding programs.

The guidelines are primarily based on the priorities established in the California Ocean Protection Act and have been adapted from Project Selection Criteria adopted by the State Coastal Conservancy. They are not intended as absolute rules for funding but as a baseline to guide a continuous granting cycle using a variety of funding sources for a wide range of projects. Because they follow directly from the Ocean Protection Act, they are meant to enable the Council to take immediate steps to provide support to many high priority activities that may be funded by the Resources Agency, the Coastal Conservancy, or other agencies whose activities relate to the protection and conservation of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems. The guidelines are modeled on the processes and procedures the State Coastal Conservancy has used to administer hundreds of millions of grant dollars during the last six years.

The guidelines are not meant to guide all of the council's activities related to supporting funding for ocean related projects and activities. With regard to basic research or for particular funding sources or project types more specific grant guidelines, requests for proposals, or other procedures may be established in the future. For example, the State Water Resources Control Board is developing its own grant guidelines for specific allocations of Proposition 40 and 50 funds. The

council's guidelines, if adopted, could be incorporated into the Board's guidelines or otherwise inform its process, by specifically identifying critical ocean protection goals adopted by the council. In other respects, though, the council's interim guidelines may have limited applicability to funding programs like the Water Board's. The procedures for project development and the council's participation in project solicitation and selection for these funds would not necessarily follow the path outlined in these interim guidelines. That path will be established in consultation with the Board in the coming months.

INTERIM FUNDING, PROJECT SELECTION, AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

In furtherance of the objectives and mandatory provisions of the California Ocean Protection Act, the California Ocean Protection Council has identified the following interim criteria to guide its selection of projects and programs to help manage and protect California's ocean and coastal resources. The council will consider supporting projects that meet these criteria in the areas of governance; economics; research, education, technology; or stewardship. The council encourages projects that involve new and innovative approaches serving both long-term visionary goals, as well as more immediate or urgent issues.

Funding and Project Selection Criteria

The council will give high priority to directing funds to projects and programs that are consistent with the following criteria:

- Projects supported by the council must implement the statutory purposes and policies of the California Ocean Protection Act, including one or more of the following objectives of the act:
 - Improve management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems;
 - Encourage those activities and uses that are consistent with sustainable, long-term protection and conservation of ocean and coastal resources;
 - Promote aesthetic, educational, and recreational uses of the coast and ocean;
 - Improve monitoring, data gathering, and advances in scientific understanding of the ocean and coastal environment;
 - Improve the quality of ocean and coastal waters;
 - Improve the health of fish and foster sustainable fisheries in ocean and coastal waters;
 - Help to integrate and coordinate the state's laws and institutions responsible for protecting and conserving ocean and coastal resources;
 - Help to coordinate the collection and sharing of scientific data;
 - Identify changes in federal law and policy necessary to achieve the state's goals for the coast and ocean.
- Projects and programs must be consistent with the purposes of the funding source.
- Projects and programs must have demonstrable support from the public.
- Projects and programs must directly relate to the ocean, coast, associated estuaries, and coastal-draining watersheds.
- Projects and programs must be of greater-than-local interest.

The council will give additional consideration to a proposed project or program that does one or more of the following:

- Helps implement the California Ocean and Coastal Information, Research, and Outreach Strategy and other priorities of local, state, or federal advisory groups, or scientific or policy reports, adopted by the council;
- Would not occur without council participation;
- Has an element of urgency (there is an immediate threat to a coastal/ ocean resource from development or natural or economic conditions, a pressing need, or a fleeting opportunity);
- Helps resolve more than one issue;
- Includes a contribution of funds or services by other entities;
- Helps with conflict resolution;
- Involves innovation (e.g. environmental or economic demonstration);
- Is ready to implement (grantee or contractor will start and finish the project in a timely manner); or
- Involves a combination of local, state, or federal agencies or is a public/private partnership.

Developing and Submitting Project Proposals

The council may direct the expenditure of funds for ocean and coastal protection from a wide variety of sources. Generally, the council will consider directing funds on a continuous basis, without specified application deadlines. Prior to submitting written proposals, potential grantees should first contact the Executive Officer of the State Coastal Conservancy, acting as Secretary to the council, to discuss the availability of funds and the consistency of the proposal with the council's interim criteria. Sponsors of projects and programs that may meet the council's criteria and for which funding may be available will be directed to supply additional information or complete a written grant application for future consideration by the council. Applications will be submitted in hard copy and electronically, and will at a minimum contain the following information:

- 1) Contact information for project leader and collaborators including affiliation, address, phone, fax, and email;
- 2) Project title;
- 3) Project timeline;
- 4) Amount of requested funds;
- 5) Amount and source of matching funds;
- 6) Statement of the problem;
- 7) Overall project goal or objective including: who would do the work; what the final product would be; and what the expected or intended result would be;
- 8) Specific description of how the project would meet the California Ocean Protection Council Funding and Project Selection Guidelines
- 9) Approach to be used;
- 10) Who would benefit from the results of the project and how?

Contact Information

Parties wishing the council to consider their proposals must contact the Executive Officer of the Conservancy at one of the following addresses or phone number:

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State Coastal Conservancy, Executive Officer
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Oakland, CA 94612

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