



Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources, Council Chair
John Garamendi, Lieutenant Governor, State Lands Commission Chair
Linda Adams, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Darrell Steinberg, State Senator, Ex officio Member
Pedro Nava, State Assemblymember, Ex officio Member

Ocean Protection Council Priorities and Guidelines for Sea Grant Research Proposals

This document provides guidance to researchers preparing proposals to submit to Sea Grant for possible funding by the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC).

Background

Creation of the OPC was mandated by the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA), which makes specific declarations regarding the preservation of ecosystems and the tools necessary to achieve those protections. Principally, COPA charges the OPC with coordinating the activities of ocean-related state agencies to improve the effectiveness of protection efforts within existing fiscal limitations; establishing policies to coordinate the collection and sharing of scientific data related to coast and ocean resources between agencies; identifying and recommending to the Legislature changes in state and federal law and policy; and providing grants or loans for projects or activities that improve the management and protection of ocean and coastal resources and ecosystems.

At its public meeting on February 8, 2007, the OPC authorized a continuation of the partnership with California's two Sea Grant programs for the purposes of funding a second round of scientific research supporting OPC research priorities. The OPC approved disbursement of \$1,000,000 of tidelands oil revenues to the two Sea Grant programs (\$800,000 to California Sea Grant College Program, \$200,000 to University of Southern California Sea Grant Program) to award and administer grants for high-quality, peer-reviewed, scientific research.

Priorities for this round of research proposals stem from the *California Ocean and Coastal Information, Research, and Outreach Strategy* and the OPC five-year strategic plan *A Vision for Our Ocean and Coast*, and relate directly to the Joint Subcommittee on Science and Technology's *National Ocean Research Priorities Plan and Implementation Strategy*.

OPC Guidelines for Research

Research projects must address or substantially contribute to management, protection, conservation, or restoration of the State's coastal and ocean resources. These endeavors must support the mandatory provisions of COPA and be consistent with the actions contained in the OPC five-year strategic plan.¹

*The overarching priority for research funded by the OPC in response to Sea Grant's 2007 call for proposals is to **understand the impacts of climate change on California's ocean and coastal ecosystems**, and to **understand and improve the health of these systems**.*

Specifically, projects that address the following points are encouraged:

- ⇒ Ecosystem models and assessments to understand and predict the impact of natural and anthropogenic processes, including climate variability and climate change, on ocean and coastal ecosystems and human communities

¹ http://resources.ca.gov/copc/docs/OPC_Strategic_Plan_2006.pdf

- ⇒ Coupled biophysical-socioeconomic models and assessments to evaluate the impact of multiple human uses on ecosystems and understand human-use patterns that may influence resource stability and sustainability

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Examine existing data sets or integrate data collected by the state's ocean observing systems: Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS) and Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System (CeNCOOS)
- Utilize and/or apply new seafloor and habitat maps
- Identify interspecies and habitat/species relationships
- Develop appropriate indicators and metrics for adaptive management
- Examine status and trends through synoptic and long-term assessments
- Identify sources and processes of ocean pollution that impact the health of humans and the marine environment
- Integrate research and monitoring across disciplines and programs optimizing the approach to ecosystem based management

Research proposals requesting OPC funds must illustrate a strong connection to management. Results of funded projects will preferably be disseminated in a product accessible by managers or conveyed to policymakers. Work plans for each proposal must specify outreach mechanisms to integrate results with state management needs. This may include a letter of support from end users (government or nongovernment) indicating the anticipated integration.

Research will be considered that involves cross-boundary or regional aspects, such as regional and international coordination. In addition to these considerations, proposals should incorporate the following requirements defined in the *Information Research and Outreach Strategy*.²

- Demonstrate how the project can assist, complement, or augment the work of government agencies or private sector interests in their efforts to manage, protect, conserve, or restore coastal or ocean resources;
- Be supported by, prepared in cooperation with, or of expressed interest to a public or private entity involved with the management, protection, conservation, or restoration of coastal or ocean resources; and
- Promote or be of discernible benefit to current or future generations.

OPC Funding Considerations

Research proposals requesting OPC funds do not have restrictions on the source of the matching requirement. Federal sources will be considered eligible as matching funds. Research conducted with OPC funds must limit indirect costs to 25 percent.

Review Process

Proposals will undergo the same review process as all other Sea Grant proposal submissions, including review by the Resources Agency Sea Grant Advisory Panel (RASGAP), which will review proposals for OPC priorities. The OPC will have staff involved in all stages of the review process, including the technical review and final decision-making. Concurrence on the selected research projects will be required from the OPC before funds are awarded.

² http://resources.ca.gov/copc/InfoResOut_Strategy_final.pdf