

**Proposed Resolution of the California Ocean Protection Council on Updating the  
State of California Sea-level Rise Guidance Document  
April 26, 2017**

WHEREAS, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopted a resolution on sea-level rise on March 11, 2011, which resolved, "...that the OPC will provide ongoing coordination with the OPC Science Advisory Team and the [Coastal and Ocean working group of the State's Climate Action Team] (CO-CAT) to support regular updates to guidance on sea-level rise for state agencies based upon current scientific understanding and projections...<sup>1</sup>"; and

WHEREAS, Governor's Executive Order B-30-15<sup>2</sup> directs state agencies to factor climate change into their planning and investment decisions, guided by the following four principles that, actions should be prioritized that build climate preparedness; where possible, flexible and adaptive approaches should be taken to prepare for uncertain climate impacts; the state's most vulnerable populations should be prioritized; and natural infrastructure solutions should be prioritized; and

WHEREAS, following Governor's Executive Order B-30-15, AB 1482 (Gordon)<sup>3</sup> directs the California Natural Resources Agency to update the Safeguarding California Plan<sup>4</sup>, the state climate adaptation strategy, of which the Ocean Protection Council is the lead for the Ocean and Coastal Resources and Ecosystems Sector. The draft 2017 Safeguarding California Plan's Ocean and Coastal Resources and Ecosystems Sector states that one of the Sector's ongoing actions is to update the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document, as well as to implement an engagement strategy in advance of the release of the guidance document; and

WHEREAS, SB 246 (Wieckowski, 2015)<sup>5</sup> directs the California Natural Resources Agency, within one year of an update to Safeguarding, to coordinate with the Office of Emergency Services, the Office of Planning and Research, and relevant public and private entities, to review and update, as necessary, the Adaptation Planning Guide to provide tools and guidance to regional and local governments and agencies in creating and implementing climate adaptation and community resiliency plans and projects. SB 246 (Wieckowski) also established the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program which coordinates regional and local efforts with state climate adaptation strategies, and is informed by a Technical Advisory Council, of which California Natural Resources Agency is a member; and

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<sup>1</sup> Ocean Protection Council Resolution on Sea-level Rise (2011).

[http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/OPC\\_SeaLevelRise\\_Resolution\\_Adopted031111.pdf](http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/OPC_SeaLevelRise_Resolution_Adopted031111.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Executive Order B-30-15 (2015). <https://www.gov.ca.gov/news.php?id=18938>

<sup>3</sup> AB 1482 (Gordon), Climate adaptation.

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201520160AB1482](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB1482)

<sup>4</sup> Safeguarding California. <http://resources.ca.gov/climate/safeguarding/>

<sup>5</sup> SB 246 (Wieckowski, 2015), Climate change adaptation.

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201520160SB246](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB246)

WHEREAS, SB 379 (Jackson)<sup>6</sup> directs cities and counties to incorporate climate adaptation and resiliency into the safety element of their General Plan. The Office of Planning and Research's General Plan Guidelines direct local governments to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document as a resource when incorporating climate adaptation and resiliency into the safety element of their General Plan; and

WHEREAS, California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment<sup>7</sup> implements a substantial portion of the California Climate Change Research Plan to ensure that California uses the latest science and information to prepare for the impacts of climate change. Sea-level rise scenarios for California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment have been identified and will be utilized in the Fourth Climate Change Assessment research projects. The update to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document will consider the sea-level rise scenarios developed for the Fourth Climate Change Assessment; and

WHEREAS, there are other recent and ongoing efforts at the local, state, and national level to address and prepare for climate change such as the climate change resolution adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board on March 7, 2017<sup>8</sup> and the Fourth National Climate Assessment<sup>9</sup> anticipated for delivery in late 2018; and

WHEREAS, the State of California Sea-level Rise Guidance Document<sup>10</sup> was initially released in 2010 and updated in 2013, and provides guidance to state agencies for incorporating sea-level rise projections into planning and investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, the Ocean Protection Council approved funding to the California Ocean Science Trust on October 17, 2016, to convene a Working Group of the OPC Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) to summarize the best available science on sea-level rise, including a focus on potential ice loss contributions to sea-level rise. The Working Group's science report<sup>11</sup> will inform the OPC's update to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document, which will reflect new scientific understanding of sea-level rise and projections; and

WHEREAS, the California Ocean Science Trust has convened a Working Group of the OPC-SAT, comprised of subject-matter experts in coastal processes, risk assessment, climatic change, ice loss and ice sheet behavior, and statistical modeling, to produce an ice loss synthesis which will feed into a science report, synthesizing best available science upon which the updated State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document will be based.

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<sup>6</sup> SB 379 (Jackson), Land use: general plan: safety element.

[https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201520160SB379](https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB379)

<sup>7</sup> California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. <http://resources.ca.gov/climate/safeguarding/research/>

<sup>8</sup> State Water Quality Control Board resolution on climate change.

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_decisions/adopted\\_orders/resolutions/2007/rs2007\\_0059.pdf](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/resolutions/2007/rs2007_0059.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Fourth National Climate Assessment. <http://www.globalchange.gov/nca4>

<sup>10</sup> State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document.

[http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/2013\\_SLR\\_Guidance\\_Update\\_FINAL1.pdf](http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/2013_SLR_Guidance_Update_FINAL1.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Rising Seas in California: An Update to Sea-level Rise Science:

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/docs/rising-seas-in-california-an-update-on-sea-level-rise-science.pdf>

WHEREAS, OPC staff have formed a Policy Advisory Committee, comprised of staff from the OPC, California Natural Resources Agency, Office of Planning and Research, and the California Energy Commission (CEC), to provide policy guidance regarding the update the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document. OPC will continue to coordinate with the Coastal and Ocean working group of the State's Climate Action Team (CO-CAT), an entity comprised of senior level staff from California state agencies with ocean and coastal resource management responsibilities, throughout the update process.<sup>12</sup> OPC has partnered with the California Natural Resources Agency and the California Ocean Science Trust to implement an engagement strategy for state agencies, local governments, Tribes, vulnerable communities and other constituents regarding the update to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document.<sup>13,14</sup>

NOW, THEREFORE, the California Ocean Protection Council hereby:

RESOLVES that OPC staff update the State Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document, in coordination with California Natural Resources Agency staff and other state agency partners, to reflect the best available science and projections of sea-level rise.

FURTHER RESOLVES that OPC staff, in coordination with California Natural Resources Agency staff, the California Ocean Science Trust and other state and local partners, implement a robust outreach and engagement process by continuing to engage with state agencies, and by engaging with local governments, Tribes, vulnerable communities and other constituents. This engagement will occur through CO-CAT and through aligning with other climate adaptation processes mentioned above, as well as through a series of public workshops to share the science report and solicit feedback on how the updated guidance document will be used. OPC staff will release a draft guidance document for public comment, and incorporate state agency and local stakeholder feedback. OPC staff will present the final guidance document to the Council for approval at its first meeting of 2018.

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<sup>12</sup> Coastal and Ocean working group of the State's Climate Action Team (CO-CAT):  
<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2010/07/coastal-and-ocean-climate-action-team-co-cat/>

<sup>13</sup> OPC website on the update to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/climate-change/updating-californias-sea-level-rise-guidance/>

<sup>14</sup> Ocean Science Trust website on the update to the State Sea-level Rise Guidance Document:  
<http://www.oceansciencetrust.org/projects/updating-californias-sea-level-rise-guidance/>