

CALIFORNIA OCEAN
PROTECTION COUNCIL

Staff Recommendation
June 8, 2006

**State Water Resources Control Board's 2005-06 Consolidated Grants Program:
Recommended Ocean Protection Projects Funding List**

Developed By: Rebecca Pollock, State Coastal Conservancy
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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Consideration of the State Water Resources Control Board's Ocean Protection Projects Funding List and possible: 1) concurrence that these projects relate to the mutual priorities adopted by the Ocean Protection Council and State Water Board, and 2) recommendation to the State Water Board to approve these projects and award \$10,000,000 of funds reserved for such projects.

NEAREST OCEAN or COASTAL LOCATION: Statewide

AGENCY OR ENTITY RECOMMENDING PROJECT: State Water Board, State Coastal Conservancy

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: January 13, 2006 memo to the Ocean Protection Council on mutual State Water Board priorities

Exhibit 2: Recommended Ocean Protection Project Funding List

Exhibit 3: Recommended Ocean Protection Project Summaries

RESOLUTION:

“The Ocean Protection Council finds pursuant to Sections 35600 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code that the State Water Resources Control Board's Ocean Protection Projects, as herein described, address the mutual priorities of the Ocean Protection Council and State Water Board, and recommends approval of these projects by the State Water Resources Control Board.”

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

At its January 13, 2006 meeting the Ocean Protection Council (council) adopted two mutual priorities with the State Water Board (see Exhibit 1). The joint priorities are:

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- (a) development and implementation of rapid indicators of beach pathogen contamination; and
- (b) implementation of control strategies and elimination of nonpoint source discharges to areas of special biological significance (ASBS).

These two priorities guided the selection of projects for award of \$10,000,000 of Consolidated Grants Program funds that are reserved for ocean protection projects. The recommended Ocean Protection Project Funding List, attached as Exhibit 2, lists the projects that were selected by staff in accordance with the rankings resulting from the State Water Board's rigorous review process and agreement of the Selection Panel, as described below. Council concurrence with the recommended list of projects will urge the State Water Board to authorize and disburse grant funds for these projects as part of the 2005-06 Consolidated Grants Program.

Staff recommends the council consider the Ocean Protection Projects Funding List and concur that these projects relate to at least one of the mutual priorities adopted by the council and State Water Board, and recommend that the State Water Board approve these projects in fulfillment of the State Water Board's commitment to provide \$10,000,000 in grants to ocean-protection related projects.

The review process

The State Water Board developed and adopted the *2005-06 Consolidated Grants Program Guidelines* to identify the Ocean Protection Project priorities and establish the review and selection process for the grant funds. As established in the Guidelines, a two-step process was used to review and evaluate the Ocean Protection Projects. Over 470 Concept Proposals were submitted for the Consolidated Grants Program. Concept Proposals were reviewed and evaluated for their ability to meet the identified priorities, and fourteen of the strongest Ocean Protection related projects were invited to submit Full Proposals. Full Proposals were reviewed and evaluated for their technical and scientific merit, in addition to their ability to improve water quality and meet the mutual priorities of the Ocean Protection Council and the State Water Board. Based on the information provided by technical review teams, the Selection Panel (comprised of members from the State Coastal Conservancy, State Water Board, California Coastal Commission, and Department of Fish and Game) developed the recommended Ocean Protection Project Funding List.

Five projects are recommended for funding to address the joint priorities identified by the council and State Water Board. Three of these projects will research, reduce, or eliminate waste discharges to areas of special biological significance, resulting in improved coastal water quality. The remaining two projects address rapid indicators of beach contamination. Project summaries are provided in Exhibit 3.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Possible Funding Sources:

State Water Board (Proposition 50, Chapter 5)	
Reserved for Ocean Protection Projects	\$10,000,000
Total Project Cost	\$10,000,000

In June 2005, State Water Board Resolution No. 2005-0041 designated \$10,000,000 of \$43,000,000 of Proposition 50 Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program funds for

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Ocean Protection Projects of mutual benefit to the council and State Water Board, consistent with California Water Code Sections 79543 and 79148 which authorizes use of these funds to protect the water quality and environment of coastal waters, estuaries, bays and nearshore waters, and groundwater. The projects selected total \$10,021,317; the \$21,317 in excess of the \$10,000,000 reserved for Ocean Protection Projects will be expended from the State Water Board's remaining Proposition 50 Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program funds. With council concurrence, State Water Board staff will recommend approval of these projects at the July 5, 2006 meeting of the State Water Board.

CONSISTENCY WITH CALIFORNIA'S OCEAN ACTION STRATEGY:

The immediate and ongoing actions listed in the Governor's Ocean Action Plan call for the continued support of the Clean Beaches Initiative. The projects selected for recommendation to the State Water Board are consistent with this initiative. Further, the projects selected are consistent with action 12 of California's Ocean Action Strategy: integrate coastal water quality programs to improve their efficiency and effectiveness in cleaning up coastal watersheds, estuaries, bays, beaches, and near-shore waters.

CONSISTENCY WITH OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL'S INTERIM PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

Mandatory Criteria

1. Furthers the following statutory purposes and policies of the Ocean Protection Act:

- **Improves management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems:** The Ocean Protection Projects on the recommended funding list address the two priorities identified by the council and State Water Board, and will directly benefit coastal waters and ocean ecosystems by researching, reducing, or eliminating waste discharges to areas of special biological significance or through the development and implementation of rapid indicators of beach pathogen contamination. The projects support the Clean Beaches Initiative, as highlighted in the Governor's Ocean Action Plan.
- **Improve monitoring, data gathering, and advances in scientific understanding of the ocean and coastal environment:** Although the specifics of the projects selected for the funding list vary, all involve a degree of monitoring, data collection, and/or data synthesis to eliminate discharges or to develop rapid indicators. Refer to Exhibit 3 for individual project details.
- **Improves the health of fish and fosters sustainable fisheries in ocean and coastal waters:** The ultimate objectives sought by all projects on the recommended funding list are improvements in coastal water quality in areas of special biological significance. These are 34 locations along California coast and offshore islands that the State Water Board has officially designated as having unique biological value and/or fragility. The rapid indicators will afford protection of human health and the health of the coastal ecosystems we depend on.
- **Helps to coordinate the collection and sharing of scientific data:** Although specifics of the projects selected for the recommended funding list vary, each project involves data collection and/or synthesis to research, reduce, or eliminate waste discharges and/or to

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develop rapid indicators for use by regional boards and health departments. Refer to Exhibit 3 for individual project details.

- **Benefits or furthers existing state programs or legislative mandates:** Mutual priorities were identified and addressed through consultation on project solicitation and award.
2. **Consistent with the purposes of the funding source:** See Project Financing Section above.
 3. **Has demonstrable support from the public:** The grantees recommended for funding have broad-based support from public stakeholders in their areas, demonstrated through the letters of support and/or cooperating entities designated in their proposals. All recommended projects directly address the mutual priorities identified by the council and State Water Board, which are demonstrably supported by the public. Significant support was received by the State Water Board from across the state for the two selected projects involving rapid indicators.
 4. **Relates directly to the ocean, coast, associated estuaries, and coastal-draining watersheds:** All projects recommended for funding are directly related to the ocean and coastal waters. The recommended projects will be funded with Proposition 50 Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, which provides funds for the purpose of financing projects that restore and protect the water quality and environment of coastal waters, estuaries, bays, and near-shore waters, and groundwater.
 5. **Has greater-than-local interest:** The protection and restoration of California's coastal waters and resources is an essential component of California's vitality. The recommended projects will continue ongoing efforts to protect and restore the water quality along California's coast, with specific projects targeted at areas of special biological significance. Although restricted to particular portions of the coast, the results of the selected projects may be applicable statewide. Both of the rapid indicator projects selected are related to clean beaches and human health, and therefore support the statewide Clean Beaches Initiative.