Staff Recommendation
January 24, 2023

Item 6a

Action Item:
Consideration of Authorization to Disburse Proposition 68 Chapter 10 Funds for Projects Advancing Coastal Resilience to Sea Level Rise

Megan Williams, Climate Change Sea Grant Fellow

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council approve the disbursement of up to $6,498,785 to various grantees for projects that build coastal resilience for coastal communities, and increase understanding of sea-level rise (SLR) impacts on coastal habitats and communities, as follows:

6a.1 $1,125,935 to University of California Santa Cruz for "Impact of sea level rise on intertidal communities: assessment to inform resilience-based management and conservation priorities"

6a.2: $798,369 to University of California Los Angeles for "Characterizing geomorphological and ecological features of sandy beaches and dunes to prepare for shifting coastlines"

6a.3: $531,306 to University of California Santa Cruz for "Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding"

6a.4: $200,000 to Save the Waves Coalition for "Informing policy and management around climate vulnerability of California's natural surfing capital"

6a.5: $1,158,500 to City of Imperial Beach for "Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project: Phase 1, Final Engineering Design"

6a.6: $2,684,675 to Newport Bay Conservancy for "Big Canyon Coastal Wetland Restoration and Adaptation Project, Phase 3"

Location: Statewide

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives: Goal 1: Safeguard Coastal and Marine Ecosystems and Communities in the Face of Climate Change; Objective 1.1: Build Resiliency to Sea-Level Rise, Coastal Storms, Erosion and Flooding; Goal 3: Enhance Coastal and Marine Biodiversity; Objective 3.1: Protect and Restore Coastal and Marine Ecosystems

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations: Community science; Youth programs; Improved access to green space; Opportunities for underrepresented students

Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Letters of Support

Findings and Resolution:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibit(s), OPC hereby finds that:

1. The proposed projects are consistent with the purposes of Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, the California Ocean Protection Act;
2. The proposed projects are consistent with OPC's Proposition 68 Guidelines, adopted May 2019; and
3. The proposed projects are not 'legal projects' that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code section, section 15378, except for:

   6a.5: Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project: Phase 1, Final Engineering Design
   The portion of this project that OPC is funding contains only design and engineering components, and therefore does not trigger CEQA. Permitting and CEQA documentation is expected to be completed simultaneously with these design plans. The City of Imperial Beach, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will

be completed by Fall 2024. CEQA compliance and permitting will be funded by an alternative source.

6a.6: Big Canyon Coastal Wetland Restoration and Adaptation Project, Phase 3
Through CDFW's Cutting the Green Tap initiative, this project qualified as a statutory exempt restoration project under CEQA in May 2022 (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080.56, subd. (e).) The City of Newport Beach, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, anticipates filing a Notice of Exemption (Categorical Exemption 15333) which will be completed early 2023. OPC funds for the project will not be released until after City of Newport Beach completes its CEQA compliance."

Staff further recommends that OPC adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 35500 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

"OPC hereby approves the disbursement of up to $6,498,785 to the following grantees to build resilience on the coast to assist coastal communities in preparing for and adapting to the impacts of sea-level rise (SLR):

- $1,657,241 to University of California Santa Cruz
- $798,369 to University of California Los Angeles
- $200,000 to Save the Waves Coalition
- $1,158,500 to City of Imperial Beach
- $2,684,675 to Newport Bay Conservancy

This authorization is subject to the condition that prior to disbursement of funds, grantees shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director of the OPC detailed work plans, schedules, staff requirements, budgets, and the names of any contractors intended to be used to complete the projects, as well as discrete deliverables that can be produced in intervals to ensure the projects are on target for successful completion. All projects will be developed under a shared understanding of process, management, and delivery."

Executive Summary:

Staff recommends that OPC approve the disbursement of $6,498,785 to fund six projects that build resilience for coastal communities and increase understanding of SLR impacts on coastal habitats and communities. In 2020-21, OPC completed a Proposition 68 Chapter 10 solicitation for coastal resilience projects, with 15 projects

selected for funding, totaling $8,056,761 distributed. Last year, OPC staff released a competitive solicitation for a second round of coastal resilience projects, specifically those that were either research-based or provide on-the-ground resilience to SLR through restoration and/or habitat enhancement. Staff is now bringing the individual recommended projects from this second round to the Council for approval.

This round of funding was highly competitive. The solicitation that was released in May 2022 received 56 letters of interest totaling $78,014,306. This resulted in 18 full proposals totaling $25,530,128. Full proposals were divided by priority topic area (coastal habitat mapping, contaminated sites, socioeconomic impacts of SLR, and implementation projects) and reviewed by a review panel consisting of OPC staff, academic scientists, subject matter experts, and state agency staff. The review panelists scored full proposals according to the Scoring Criteria for Chapter 10, provided on page 16 of the Proposition 68 Grant Guidelines. The review panel scores and recommendations for funding were used to guide internal project selection by OPC staff and OPC's Acting Executive Director. In addition to the review panel scores, projects were selected to represent a diversity of project types, geographies, and OPC priorities.

Through innovative research that will study the effects of SLR and flooding on coastal habitats, contaminated sites, and coastal recreation, along with implementation projects providing on-the-ground resilience to SLR over the next 50-100 years, these six projects address many of the OPC Strategic Plan's Goal 1 targets, as well as those outlined in the State Agency SLR Action Plan for California. Together, these investments will provide managers and policymakers with much needed information, tools, and best practices to make informed decisions when addressing the effects of climate change on California coasts and communities.

Project Summaries:

6a.1: Impact of sea level rise on intertidal communities: assessment to inform resilience-based management and conservation priorities

Project Summary:

With SLR predicted to be between 0.5 and 2.0 meters above current levels by 2100, there is a need to determine how SLR will impact habitats and species found along California's coast. Habitats and species under tidal influence, such as those in rocky intertidal systems, are particularly susceptible to SLR impacts. This project will

provide a spatially explicit projection of the habitat and ecological consequences of SLR by linking species tidal ranges to new habitat mapping for the state of California.

The project will cover all rocky intertidal areas in the state of California. Drones will be used to create high resolution digital elevation maps (DEMs) for all rocky intertidal areas. For species habitat association and tidal range data, the project will utilize the Multi-Agency Rocky Intertidal Network (MARINe)'s extensive 25-year dataset. The DEMs will then be combined with MARINe species elevation datasets to produce 3D species distribution maps based on current sea levels.

As a final product, this project will provide a tool that can be used to predict geographic consequences of SLR to the community of species that live along the coastline of California through Species Distribution Modeling. The resultant integrated and live interactive visualization tool will provide spatially explicit projections (i.e., 3D species maps) and derived datasets. These deliverables will be novel and essential for informing sound coastal policy and management on how SLR will impact California coastal habitats.

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

This project will engage community groups (e.g., tribes, schools, community science groups, conservation societies) in providing validation data of the habitat maps and species distribution. Working with the NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (CCME) at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB), the project will engage with and train diverse student populations with the drone mapping work. Lastly, the project includes providing an equitable assessment of coastal resources to habitats that overlap with and border disadvantaged communities. Engagement with these communities is planned through working with the CCME social science team and attending the annual SACNAS (Advancing Hispanic/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science) conference.

About the Grantee:

The University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) is a public R1 university that has been a leader in the study of marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems, and how these ecosystems are affected by climate change. The lead researchers on this project, based at UCSC and CSUMB, bring decades of experience in this project's topic areas. This includes a thorough understanding of California's rocky shore ecosystems, nearshore oceanography, the creation and design of ecological

monitoring programs, and extensive experience in drone usage for spatial and temporal dynamic studies.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over three years (March 2023 – March 2026).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $1,125,935 to University of California Santa Cruz for Impact of sea level rise on intertidal communities: assessment to inform resilience-based management and conservation priorities.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$1,125,935
OPC Total	**$1,125,935**
California Marine Sanctuary Foundation	$136,787
UC Santa Cruz In-Kind	$148,372
BOEM In-Kind	$156,400
Total Non-OPC Match	**$441,559**
TOTAL	**$1,567,494**

6a.2: Characterizing geomorphological and ecological features of sandy beaches and dunes to prepare for shifting coastlines

Project Summary:

Sandy beaches and dunes are one of the ecosystems most threatened by SLR. However, assessing the vulnerability of these ecosystems is difficult due to their dynamic nature and challenges associated with collecting detailed, high-frequency data over large areas. This project will develop and test new drone and high-resolution satellite imagery approaches to characterize and map the dynamic features and zones of sandy beach and dune ecosystems.

The project will cover 12 beach and dune sites located across the state of California, including sites in northern (Del Norte and Humboldt County), central (Mendocino, Santa Cruz, Monterey Counties), and southern (Los Angeles and San

Diego County) California. Ultimately, this project intends to advance novel uses of drone-based sensors in dynamic coastal settings, validate drone-based measurements against satellite imagery, and evaluate how proxy SLR events, such as king tides, can be monitored via drones and used to project beach and dune ecosystem change into the future. The project results will be made available to the local communities and can be useful for land-use planning purposes.

Direct engagement with stakeholders will occur through regional workshops and a statewide CoastSnap network (as described in more detail below) that focuses on disadvantaged communities. Additionally, this project will improve open coast classifications within the California Aquatic Resources Inventory (CARI).

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

Eight of the project's twelve study sites are in disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities. During the project's data collection and analysis stage, the project leads will host four regional community workshops, where the goal will be to engage local communities with the research. Local managers and community organizations, in addition to community members, will be provided information about the project and how SLR is projected to impact their community. The imagery, data products, and publications will be made freely available from the onset of the project to local managers and community organizations in the study site communities.

Additionally, the project intends to implement a California Regional CoastSnap program. CoastSnap is a community-based beach monitoring program in coastal regions across the world, but San Diego County is currently the only place on the west coast North America where the program operates. This tool allows for repeated data collection from beaches by community members and visitors who utilize the CoastSnap App and permanent photo stations to take images of a beach from a fixed location over time. The benefit of CoastSnap is that it provides useful data to researchers while also visually documenting coastal change and the impacts of climate change that anyone can view and monitor over time.

About the Grantee:

The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) is a public R1 university that is known as a leader in research in environmental studies. The lead researchers on this project, based at UCLA and UC Santa Barbara (UCSB), bring decades of experience in this project's topic areas. This includes a thorough understanding of

sandy beaches and dune ecosystems, drone and satellite based remote sensing, and coastal ecology impacts under climate change.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over three years (March 2023 – March 2026).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $798,369 to University of California Los Angeles for Characterizing geomorphological and ecological features of sandy beaches and dunes to prepare for shifting coastlines.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$798,369
OPC Total	**$798,369**
UCLA In-Kind	$70,000
Total Non-OPC Match	**$70,000**
TOTAL	**$868,369**

6a.3: Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding

Project Summary:

The San Francisco Bay Area is home to more contaminated sites than any other region in California due to industrialization, a history of military land uses, rapid growth, and urbanization. The impacts of flooding associated with SLR and groundwater levels on contaminated sites may include inundation, waste solution migration, physical erosion, and saltwater intrusion, which present a potential public health crisis. Site remediation and adaptation prioritization will require further research, especially on the contaminants.

The main objective of this project is to categorize, characterize, and map hazardous material that is at risk of flooding by 2050 around San Francisco Bay. The project will prioritize which sites to study based on the nature of the site and the severity of flood risk. Sites managed by the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board (SF RWQCB), Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be included in the inventory. This

inventory's outputs will include a comprehensive summary document and database, a map, and FAQ sheets.

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

Historically disadvantaged communities in low-income neighborhoods with large cumulative pollution burdens will be hit harder than those in wealthier neighborhoods with more resources. In the SF Bay Area specifically, many toxic waste sites vulnerable to sea-level and groundwater rise are near disadvantaged communities–a historical legacy of residential segregation and industrial development patterns. One of the criteria this project will use to identify and profile the project's sites will be proximity to disadvantaged/severely disadvantaged communities. Moreover, the educational FAQ sheets and searchable database will aim to inform community members about future toxic risk levels, so they can advocate for their communities and engage in policy discussions as informed participants.

The research team will collaborate with the SF Bay Area-based community nonprofit, Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice, who has been working on the issue of the impact of SLR on toxic sites in historically disadvantaged communities in the SF Bay Area for the past 7 years. Additionally, a community organization advisory committee will be established that will be comprised of SF Bay Shoreline Contamination Cleanup Coalition members. This committee will be consulted for outreach and feedback at specific stages of the project.

About the Grantee:

UCSC is a public R1 university that has been a leader in the study of marine, freshwater, and terrestrial ecosystems, and how these ecosystems are changing due to climate change. The lead researchers on this project, based at UCSC and University of California Berkeley (UCB), bring decades of experience in this project's topic areas. These areas include a thorough understanding of California's coastal geology and oceanography, urban ecology and hydrology, groundwater/soil contamination, and toxic legacies in the San Francisco Bay.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two and a half years (March 2023 – August 2025).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $531,306 to University of California Santa Cruz for Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$531,306
OPC Total	**$531,306**
TOTAL	**$531,306**

6a.4: Informing policy and management around climate vulnerability of California's natural surfing capital

Project Summary:

Surf breaks and their recreational, ecological and economic value are highly vulnerable to climate change. Climate risks such as SLR, storms, and episodic erosion threatens the viability and existence of surf breaks. As the official state sport, surfing is a huge and growing part of the coastal economy, yet it is not well understood how the economic impacts are distributed in coastal communities and how the coastal economy of surfing will be impacted by SLR.

This project will determine the existing vulnerabilities and economic values of surfing locations in California and evaluate what the future surf conditions and economic value could be under different adaptation approaches. As a pilot study, this project will use non-market valuation methods to estimate the economic value of surfing resources in the World Surfing Reserve of Santa Cruz. Climate vulnerability will be assessed using the best available science to determine changes from historically observed conditions, model projections of wave climate patterns, and SLR. The project will also utilize an economic survey instrument that combines travel cost and contingent behavior questions, focusing on key physical and socio-economic site attributes that drive visitation and coastal recreation. Ultimately, this pilot study will integrate the economic and physical vulnerability data to estimate local impacts of SLR on the surf economy of Santa Cruz. Results of this project will help inform adaptation and policy decisions across California, with an emphasis on green infrastructure and adaptation, showing the potential economic losses for hard infrastructure projects that destroy or impinge surf break quality.

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

Part of this project in establishing climate change vulnerability and the economic valuation of California surfing locations, is to determine future use and option value. Therefore, the project team will not only determine current economic value of these locations, but also potential economic value by communities not currently accessing or using these coastal resources. This requires understanding socio-economic and cultural barriers to surfing locations for disadvantaged communities. An additional component to this is also understanding non-economic cultural values to the project sites. The research team will collaborate with Esabella Bonner from Black Surf Club Santa Cruz to create and implement the project's outreach strategy.

About the Grantee:

Save the Waves Coalition (STW) has almost 20 years of experience running outreach campaigns, conducting economic valuation and creating protected areas at surf locations around the globe. Based in Santa Cruz, the project team has a strong foundation with local community-based organizations, and intimate knowledge and understanding of the project site. STW will partner with Integral Consulting, CSU Channel Islands, Surfrider Foundation, and Black Surf Club Santa Cruz to bring expertise into the climate vulnerability assessment, economic survey design, and community outreach portions of the project.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two years (March 2023 – March 2025).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $200,000 to Save the Waves Coalition for Informing policy and management around climate vulnerability of California's natural surfing capital.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$200,000
OPC Total	**$200,000**
Resources Legacy Fund	$15,000
City of Santa Cruz	$40,000
Surfrider Foundation	$20,000

Total Non-OPC Match	**$85,000**
TOTAL	**$285,000**

6a.5: Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project: Phase 1, Final Engineering Design

Project Summary:

This project builds on a previous Prop 68 grant funded by OPC for initial planning and design. The San Diego Bayshore Bikeway is a heavily used recreational corridor that is adjacent to the shoreline of San Diego Bay. The proposed project will retrofit a 1.2-mile segment of the Bikeway to provide coastal flooding resilience to the disadvantaged/severely disadvantaged Bayside Community in the City of Imperial Beach. The project will focus on developing resilient strategies that improve flood protection, enhance public access, and restore and enhance coastal habitats. The project utilizes existing public right-of-way, infrastructure, open space habitat, and integrates a living shoreline, living levee to protect the Bayside neighborhood from future impacts of SLR to 3.5 feet. Additionally, the project will mitigate existing compound flooding within the Bayside neighborhood by daylighting an underground stormwater conveyance system, and ultimately creating a new multi-purpose treatment basin that will serve as a new joint use park for the community.

OPC funds will be used to complete Phase 1 of this project. This includes completing final engineering plans for the coastal resiliency adaptation features and public access enhancements, as well as continuing outreach. Major features of the construction project will include a natural shoreline living levee, a multi-purpose detention basin/recreational park, and enhancing public access nodes to the Bikeway. The project team will conduct inclusive outreach to the community and local stakeholders to foster engagement and solicit community input, targeted towards the affected adjacent disadvantaged community. The project team intends to engage multiple stakeholders including the residents and businesses in the community, community-based organizations, and officials from local, regional, state, and federal agencies. For all planned outreach approaches, such as small group meetings, public workshops, online outreach, and participation in public events, the team will provide tools for gathering, visualizing, and evaluating geospatial information for this participatory planning effort in the predominant language(s) of the community.

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

This project will benefit the disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities of Imperial Beach by preparing for future effects of climate change by improving resiliency to SLR and associated hazards. A new multi-use path will relieve congestion of the Bikeway, improve pedestrian safety, and provide connectivity to the open spaces and restored habitat areas adjacent to the disadvantaged communities.

Imperial Beach is also severely impacted by sewage and trash from the Tijuana River which depresses economic development in the entire City. The current pollution crisis from the Tijuana River makes the relatively pristine habitat and recreational opportunities along San Diego Bay even more valuable.

About the Grantee:

The City of Imperial Beach is a residential coastal city. Located in San Diego County, the city is the southernmost city in California, located just 5 miles northwest of Tijuana, Mexico. The city has experience managing similar multijurisdictional projects, including the previous Prop 68 grant funded by OPC. The city has assembled a team of planners, scientists, and engineers with technical expertise on similar projects addressing SLR, coastal resiliency, public engagement, and public access to ensure successful completion of this project.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over two years (March 2023 – March 2025).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $1,158,500 to City of Imperial Beach for Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project: Phase 1, Final Engineering Design.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$1,158,500
OPC Total	**$1,158,500**
FEMA BRIC (Construction Phase)	$15,160.988.50
City of Imperial Beach In-Kind	$75,000
Total Non-OPC Match	**$15,235,988.50**

TOTAL	**$16,394,488.50**

6a.6: Big Canyon Coastal Wetland Restoration and Adaptation Project, Phase 3

Project Summary:

This project is the final phase of a multi-phase water quality, restoration, and adaptation project in Big Canyon Nature Park, and builds on a previous Prop 1 grant funded by OPC for Phase 2. The 60-acre open space is located at the downstream end of the Big Canyon Watershed in the City of Newport Beach, within Orange County, California. Big Canyon Nature Park has been degraded by numerous, well-documented impacts and requires habitat restoration and enhancement to improve the site's biological productivity and ecological function.

This project consists of several components, including restoring 14 acres of historical salt marsh and establishment of transitional wetland habitats, providing long-term benefits to climate resiliency along the California Coast. The project proposes to extend the saltwater influence into the project limits, allowing the tidal extent and inundation to increase with SLR. Transitional zones will allow migration of salt marsh vegetation with future SLR to improve the overall resiliency of salt marsh in Upper Newport Bay, supporting sensitive coastal habitats and several federally and state listed species.

Equity and Environmental Justice Considerations:

The project will provide direct benefits to students from nearby disadvantaged communities. The restoration is designed to be an important educational resource for teachers throughout Orange County School Districts. Newport Bay Conservancy (NBC) fosters relationships with multiple southern California schools to provide ongoing educational and stewardship opportunities for over 3,000 students annually. The Bay and the trails in Big Canyon are a regular destination for these hands-on learning programs that help with ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the project site. The restoration is being designed by ecologists to provide a spectrum of integrated habitats to facilitate the educational experience of students visiting Upper Newport Bay.

Two specific programs involving Big Canyon include Inside the Outdoors and Fostering Interest in Nature (FiiN). In partnership with the Orange County Department of Education and the City of Newport Bay, Inside the Outdoors provides watershed educational activities for 4th grade students throughout the county including disadvantaged communities. NBC, along with the City of Newport Bay hosts the FiiN program for 5th grade students. Both programs serve Title 1 schools in Orange County and include educational hikes, experiments, and tying in Native American connection to the land and waters through exploration in the Canyon. Part of the program also includes hiring Environmental Leaders to prepare a site for restoration, remove invasive species and propagate plant native plant species, and maintain a restoration site over time. Leaders come from local community colleges and universities studying climate change and restoration methods.

About the Grantee:

NBC is focused exclusively on the protection and preservation of Upper Newport Bay (UNP) – one of the very few remaining, undeveloped wetlands on the California coast. This area, which includes Big Canyon, is maintained by trained staff and volunteers at NBC, who work in small groups to maintain restoration locations every week, working to remove invasives and preserve the natural vegetation. NBC has also successfully completed Phase 1 and 2 of the restoration of Big Canyon and are well suited in their partnerships with CDFW and the City of Newport Beach to continue this success into Phase 3.

Project Timeline:

This project will be completed over three years (March 2023 – March 2026).

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that OPC approve disbursement of up to $2,684,675 to Newport Bay Conservancy for Big Canyon Coastal Wetland Restoration and Adaptation Project, Phase 3.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 68	$2,684,675
OPC Total	**$2,684,675**
Newport Bay Conservancy In-Kind	$60,000
City of Newport Beach In-Kind	$70,000

Total Non-OPC Match	**$130,000**
TOTAL	**$2,814,675**

Project Financing:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) authorize encumbrance of up to $6,498,785 to the following:

Summary of Recommended Proposition 68 Coastal Resilience Projects:	**Prop 68 Funding:**
6a.1: University of California Santa Cruz	$1,125,935
6a.2: University of California Los Angeles	$798,369
6a.3: University of California Santa Cruz	$531,306
6a.4: Save the Waves Coalition	$200,000
6a.5: City of Imperial Beach	$1,158,500
6a.6: Newport Bay Conservancy	$2,684,675
TOTAL	**$6,498,785**

The anticipated source of funds will be from the OPC's Chapter 10 appropriation pursuant to the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 - Proposition 68 (Public Resources Code §80130). Funds may be used "for projects that plan, develop, and implement climate adaptation and resiliency projects." Section 80133 identifies specific purposes for Chapter 10, which includes "projects that assist coastal communities, including those reliant on commercial fisheries, with adaptation to climate change, including projects that address ocean acidification, sea level rise, or habitat restoration and protection…." The proposed projects are an appropriate use of Proposition 68 funds because they each will improve coastal resiliency and adaptation to climate change, specifically SLR, by providing state resource management agencies and local jurisdictions with data necessary to plan, develop, and implement coastal resilience projects and to inform management decisions that protect marine biodiversity and water quality, advance coastal adaptation efforts, and support climate-ready fisheries.

Consistency with California Ocean Protection Act:

The proposed project is consistent with the Ocean Protection Act, Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, because it is consistent with trust-fund allowable projects, defined in Public Resources Code Section 35650(b)(2) as projects which:

- Eliminate or reduce threats to coastal and ocean ecosystems, habitats, and species.
- Improve management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems.
- Provide monitoring and scientific data to improve state efforts to protect and conserve ocean resources.
- Protect, conserve, and restore coastal waters and ocean ecosystems.
- Provide funding for adaptive management, planning coordination, monitoring, research, and other necessary activities to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change on California's ocean ecosystem.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

The proposed projects have different statuses under CEQA as follows:

6a.1: Impact of sea level rise on intertidal communities: assessment to inform resilience-based management and conservation priorities,

6a.2: Characterizing geomorphological and ecological features of sandy beaches and dunes to prepare for shifting coastlines,

6a.3: Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding, and

6a.4: Informing policy and management around climate vulnerability of California's natural surfing capital

Are not 'legal projects' that trigger the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21068 and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, section 15378. If any were determined to be a 'legal project' under CEQA, the proposed project(s) are categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to 14 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 15306 because the projects involve information collection, consisting of data collection,

research, and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

6a.5: Bayshore Bikeway Resiliency Project: Phase 1, Final Engineering Design

The portion of this project that OPC is funding contains only design and engineering components, and therefore does not trigger CEQA. Permitting and CEQA documentation is expected to be completed simultaneously with these design plans. The City of Imperial Beach, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which will be completed by Fall 2024. CEQA compliance and permitting will be funded by an alternative source.

6a.6: Big Canyon Coastal Wetland Restoration and Adaptation Project, Phase 3

Through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Cutting the Green Tape initiative, this project qualified as a statutory exempt restoration project (SERP) under CEQA in May 2022 (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080.56, subd. (e).) The City of Newport Beach, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, anticipates filing a Notice of Exemption (Categorical Exemption 15333) which will be completed early 2023. OPC funds for the project will not be released until after City of Newport Beach completes its CEQA compliance.