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California Funds Innovative Ocean Science Trust to Provide Science Advice to the State

California Secretary of Natural Resources Leads Effort to Support Science-Based Decision-Making

Sacramento, CA -- California's Ocean Protection Council voted this month to continue funding for a unique non-profit organization mandated by state legislation to provide science to support informed decisions for the future of California's coasts and oceans. The council authorized disbursement of up to \$445,000 to the California Ocean Science Trust to provide science and science communication services to the State of California until June of 2019.

"We applaud the Ocean Protection Council for its continued support of Ocean Science Trust as Science Advisor and manager of the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team. Thanks in part to this innovative structure, California is a recognized leader in science-informed decision-making," said Warner Chabot, Executive Director of the San Francisco Estuary Institute. "This dual role has been especially effective in the past and will be even more important in an increasingly uncertain environmental future," stated George Leonard, Chief Scientist of the Ocean Conservancy in another letter of support for the Council's action.

A diverse coalition including NRDC, Surfrider, the Center for Ocean Solutions, the University of California and more supported a yes vote by the Council to continue providing funding for science services from the independent non-profit. "Because of its well-recognized position, Ocean Science Trust hosts interagency and interdisciplinary working groups on pressing, timely issues affecting California's marine ecosystems, fisheries, and coastal communities," said Michael Bell, Oceans Program Director at The Nature Conservancy. The Executive Director of the Ocean Science Trust was designated as the Science Advisor to the Council in 2008.

As an independent nonprofit, Ocean Science Trust will continue its commitment to bring private funding to leverage state support for these pressing ocean issues. To date the organization has raised \$8 million dollars of funding from private and federal sources in support of science-based improvements to ocean management. Ocean Science Trust has defined scientific perspectives on pressing topics such as ocean acidification, oil and gas decommissioning, fisheries management, marine protected areas, and response to catastrophic events such as harmful algal blooms and oil spills. Current projects include improving understanding of changing ocean conditions, sustainable fisheries management, and monitoring California's groundbreaking network of marine protected areas.

"We at Ocean Science Trust are pleased and honored that the Ocean Protection Council has placed its faith in our work as Science Advisor and look forward to working to bring the best ocean science to managers and policy makers," said Tom Maloney, Executive Director of the Trust.

The continued funding ensures the ongoing success of [Ocean Science Trust](#) in its current work, including the implementation of recommendations of the [West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Panel](#) and continued management of an innovative program to evaluate the performance of California's statewide network of marine protected areas. "As we face the impacts of a changing climate, the Ocean Science Trust is an important

partner in helping California build the independent science we need to effectively steward our ocean resources,” said California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird.

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California Ocean Science Trust works across traditional boundaries, bringing together governments, scientists, and citizens to build trust and understanding in ocean and coastal science. As an independent non-profit organization, we empower participation in the decisions that are shaping the future of our oceans. Established by the California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act, the organization encourages coordinated, multi-agency, multi-institution approaches to ocean resource science. For more information please visit us at www.oceansciencetrust.org, on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#), or call (510) 350-1892.