

## **Synopsis and potential projects for a Sea Grant fellow at the California Ocean Protection Council**

### **Overview**

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) was created by the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA) in 2004. The overall goal of the OPC is to improve the way that California manages and protects its vast coastal and ocean resources by promoting coordination among the state agencies. Through the authority of its member agencies, the OPC is expected to identify and recommend changes to state and federal policies, programs, and laws that hinder effective and sustainable management of ocean and coastal resources. The OPC is also working to coordinate ocean resource management efforts with Oregon and Washington through the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health.

In addition to coordinating ocean-related activities of state agencies, the OPC uses strategic funding initiatives to further policy both regionally and statewide, enhance ocean conservation, and encourage sustainable use of marine resources. To this end, the OPC is working on many projects along the state's coastline and in coastal waters, guided by its five-year Strategic Plan (available at <http://www.opc.ca.gov/strategic-plan>). Examples of projects funded to date include: benthic habitat and seafloor mapping; ocean and coastal monitoring; innovative approaches to fisheries management; a statewide public ocean awareness campaign; scientific research through the Sea Grant programs; integrated ocean observing planning; and various ecosystem-based management efforts.

The OPC staff, housed at the Coastal Conservancy office in Oakland, is currently involved in developing and managing various large-scale projects and developing innovative policy solutions on marine resource issues, including:

- developing aquatic invasive species risk assessments
- ocean litter reduction policy
- a collaborative fisheries research organization
- innovative ideas for improved salmon populations throughout the state
- funding scientific research that directly informs management issues
- using ocean observation technology in projects on fisheries, climate change and oil spill response
- generating information on sea level rise and developing adaptation strategies
- spatial data analysis and assessment of user conflicts in ocean waters

Staff also provides recommendations of potential actions to the council such as issue-focused resolutions, policies, and changes to legislation.

### **Sea Grant fellow position description**

A Sea Grant fellow with the OPC will support the functions of the council, including agenda setting, policy recommendations, and project development. Specifically, the role of the fellow may include support on the above mentioned large-scale projects and they will also likely have several smaller projects which will be theirs to develop and manage.

Potential tasks associated with managing projects include: frequent communication with project stakeholders, partners, or grantees; presenting staff recommendations to the council; drafting and amending contracts and grant agreements; managing project-related invoices; organizing, and/or leading related meetings and workshops; participating in site visits; ensuring outcomes of projects are communicated to the public, relevant agencies, and institutions; seeking out additional funding sources or matching funds; encouraging transparency by working with stakeholders; and working to maintain broad project or program support.

Given the wide range of projects and initiatives undertaken by the OPC, a successful Sea Grant fellow at the OPC must be willing to take on and administer a broad range of projects. However, there will likely be opportunity for the fellow to dig more deeply into topics of particular interest. The Sea Grant fellow must be able to work independently well under minimal supervision or guidance. Possessing an entrepreneurial spirit and strong personal initiative would be a great plus.

**Host location**

State Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612