

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE AND TDD (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Lesley Ewing, Sr. Coastal Engineer *Lesley Ewing*

SUBJECT: **Conference on "Solutions to Coastal Disasters"**
Recommendation for California Coastal Commission Sponsorship

SYNOPSIS

The Coasts, Oceans, Ports and Rivers Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers will be holding a conference on Solutions to Coastal Disasters in San Diego, California, 24 – 27 February 2002. Staff is recommending that the Commission join this conference as a sponsoring organization. Such sponsorship would entail some in-kind services, as outlined below. No direct financial contributions will be necessary.

Introduction: Eighty per cent of the world's population lives in the coastal zone. These concentrations are expected to grow in the future, along with the damages and threats of natural coastal hazards such as coastal storms, flooding, hurricanes, tsunamis, climate change, and shoreline change. In the United States alone, coastal disasters are estimated to cause annual damages in excess of \$1 billion. Coastal disasters are a worldwide concern.

There are many different aspects of coastal disasters. The Solutions to Coastal Disasters Conference will focus on four major coastal disaster aspects:

- Causes
- Response Mitigation Strategies
- Design and Engineering
- Coastal Management

The audience will be coastal planners, managers, scientists, engineers, geologists, economists, oceanographers, meteorologists and others with knowledge or interest in the coast. This conference will not address the issues of immediate disaster response

(such evacuations, triage, and first aid); rather it will address the efforts to identify potentially disastrous situations on the coast along with the suite of actions that can minimize or avoid future disasters.

Conference Details and Participating Organizations: Solutions to Coastal Disasters will be held in San Diego, California, at the Catamaran Hotel, 24 – 27 February 2002. This conference is being organized jointly by the Coasts, Oceans, Ports and Rivers Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Association of State Flood Plain Managers, the Coastal States Organization, the Association of Coastal Engineers and the Coastal Zone Foundation. Efforts are now underway to solicit support and sponsorship from other governmental, private and corporate organizations that have identified an interest in coastal issues or disaster prevention.

Conference Goals:

- Bring together coastal researchers, scientists and managers for information exchange about coastal disasters
- Project future trends in coastal disaster occurrence and management options, though examination of past events
- Demonstrate and improve links between coastal research, engineering, management and decision-making
- Identify gaps in information exchange between researchers and managers; offer potential solutions to close these gaps.

Activities: The conference goals will be met through a variety of related activities. The conference will include short courses on recent programs, such as the FEMA Coastal Construction Manual, plenary sessions, technical sessions, panel discussions, cross-disciplinary discussions, exhibits and field trips. In addition, there will be several social events throughout the four-day conference to allow for informal discussions, follow-up to formal presentations and small-group interactions.

Expected Products: All conference presenters will be asked to provide a 10 to 14 page written paper discussing their work. The American Society of Civil Engineers will compile these papers into Conference Proceedings that will be available at the conference and will be provided to all paying participants. These Proceedings will also be available to non-conference participants from the ASCE publications department. In addition to the written Proceedings, there will be exhibit materials and posters that will be available only at the conference.

Relationship to mandate of the Coastal Commission: The goals of the conference are consistent with the State of California's long-term goals for the coast, especially the goal, as defined in Section 30001.5(e) of the California Coastal Act, to "encourage state and local initiatives and cooperation in preparing procedures to implement coordinated

planning and development for mutually beneficial uses...in the coastal zone.” In addition, pursuant to Section 30012 of the Coastal Act, the Commission can offer its help in developing a public education program “that includes outreach efforts to schools, youth organizations, and the general public for the purpose of encouraging public participation in programs for the conservation and wise use of coastal and ocean resources.”

Coastal Commission Contributions: The Commission could provide substantial benefit to this conference by becoming a conference sponsor. This sponsorship would enable the conference organizers to use the name of the Commission in soliciting funds and in advertising the conference. Other support from the Commission would include: providing staff support for the conference web site; providing staff support to assist in development of conference materials; providing conference announcements and a link to the conference web site on the Commission web site; and encouraging staff to attend and participate in the conference. This sponsorship would not necessitate any direct financial obligation on the part of the Commission.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Commission join the Solutions to Coastal Disasters conference as a sponsor. The Commission’s Web Site Coordinator will help with the conference web site. The Commission’s staff coastal engineer will serve as principal conference contact person and will attend the conference. Other staff members as appropriate may also be called upon to further the objectives of the workshop and of the Commission as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director.

Motion:

“I move that the Commission adopt the staff recommendation, by authorizing the Executive Director to execute a letter of support for the “Solutions to Coastal Disasters” conference.

Staff recommends a YES vote.

More information about the “Solutions to Coastal Disasters Conference” can be found at <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/cdsolutions>

