

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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



W25c

DATE: September 27, 2012

TO: Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Charles Lester, Executive Director
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Christiane Parry, Public Education Program Manager

SUBJECT: **Interagency agreement with the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) to receive \$50,000 to address marine debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami; and subvention contract to pass the funds through to the California State Parks Foundation.**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to enter into an interagency agreement with the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) for \$50,000 in order to address incoming marine debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami by enhancing the Commission's Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach programs. Staff further recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to pass through the \$50,000 by entering into a subvention contract with the nonprofit California State Parks Foundation.

I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

MOTION

"I move that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to enter into an interagency agreement with the California Emergency Management Agency for \$50,000.

I further move that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to pass through this \$50,000 and enter into a subvention contract for with the California State Parks Foundation for the purpose of enhancing the Commission's Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach programs to address incoming marine debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami."

Staff recommends a **YES** vote on these motions. Passage of these motions will result in authorization of the Executive Director or his designee to enter into the appropriate agreements for accepting and then disbursing the available funds.

II. INTRODUCTION

At its August Commission meeting, staff briefed the Commission and the public on the status of preparations for the arrival of marine debris from the March 2011 tsunami in Japan. The earthquake and resulting tsunami in Japan last March sent 1.5 million tons of floating debris into the Pacific (Ocean), according to latest estimates from the Japanese Government. That debris is slowly making its way towards the West Coast, with confirmed reports of debris washing up in Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. While there have been no confirmed reports of tsunami debris washing ashore in California, predictions have it arriving here soon. There have also been many unconfirmed reports occurring along the entire length of the state's coastline. In light of the increased attention on marine debris brought about by the tsunami, an increasing number of potential volunteers are expressing interest in participating in beach cleanup programs. California's challenge is to harness the energy of these potential volunteers in a safe and effective manner, while continuing to address the tsunami debris as it washes ashore.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently awarded Cal EMA \$50,000 to address incoming marine debris from the tsunami. While this amount does not represent sufficient funding to support the removal of very large-scale items that may land on California's shores, Cal EMA recognizes the importance of supporting citizens on the ground who may be finding smaller items and removing them in the course of their beach cleanup activities. Therefore Cal EMA proposes to pass through its \$50,000 NOAA grant in its entirety to the California Coastal Commission for volunteer beach cleanup activities.

III. ENHANCEMENT OF COASTAL CLEANUP DAY AND ADOPT-A-BEACH PROGRAMS

To address incoming tsunami debris, the Coastal Commission proposes to work with local partners to hold more frequent beach cleanups (especially at those sites that are known to receive larger quantities of ocean-borne debris), improve data tracking, and increase California's ability to dispose of accumulated debris properly. Using the \$50,000, the Commission's Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach Programs would be enhanced in the following ways to accomplish these goals:

- (1) Increasing publicity, outreach, and data collection capabilities for the statewide California beach cleanup programs, in order to let Californians know about the opportunity to participate in volunteer beach cleanups to look for potential tsunami debris;
- (2) Developing or acquiring appropriate beach cleanup materials such as a simplified tsunami debris data card appropriate for one-time volunteers, trash bags, and gloves; and
- (3) Providing mini-grants (totaling over \$30,000) to partnering organizations running cleanups along the California coast to help support the cost of staff time, additional supplies, local outreach materials and advertising, and disposal costs such as placement of debris bins or payment to waste haulers for the additional cleanups needed to address the tsunami debris.

IV. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT AND SUBVENTION CONTRACT

In order to receive the \$50,000 grant, the Coastal Commission must enter into an interagency agreement with Cal EMA, which has already been designated by NOAA as the initial recipient of tsunami debris funds for the State of California.

Staff recommends passing through this \$50,000 to the California State Parks Foundation (CSPF), which acts as a fiscal sponsor for the Commission's beach cleanup programs. CSPF is already home to the Adopt-A-Beach Fund that receives Coastal Cleanup Day corporate sponsorships and other donations. CSPF would administer the disbursement of the \$50,000, including issuing over \$30,000 in mini-grants.

The motion is on page 1 of this staff report.