

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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W6b

DATE: April 30, 2014

TO: Commissioners and Interested Parties

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

SUBJECT: **Interagency agreement with the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to receive \$250,000 to address marine debris from the 2011 Japan 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 Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for \$250,000 in order to address incoming marine debris from the 2011 Japan tsunami by enhancing the Commission's Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach programs. Staff further recommends that that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to pass through the \$250,000 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 Office of Emergency Services for \$250,000.

I further move that the Commission authorize the Executive Director or his designee to pass through this \$250,000 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 Japan tsunami."

Staff recommends a **YES** vote on the foregoing 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

The earthquake and resulting tsunami in Japan in 2011 sent an estimated 1.5 million tons of floating debris into the Pacific Ocean. That debris has been making its way towards the West Coast, with confirmed reports of debris washing up in Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Crescent City, California. There have also been many unconfirmed reports occurring along the entire length of California's coastline. In light of the increased attention on marine debris brought about by the tsunami, volunteers have been expressing interest in participating in beach cleanup programs.

In 2012, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) awarded Cal OES \$300,000 to address incoming marine debris from the tsunami (\$250,000 from the government of Japan and \$50,000 from NOAA's marine debris program). Recognizing the importance of supporting citizens on the ground who may be finding small tsunami debris items and removing them in the course of their beach cleanup activities, Cal OES awarded a \$50,000 grant to the Coastal Commission in late 2012 to implement enhancements of the Commission's current Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach Programs in California. As a result of receiving this grant the Commission established a Japan Tsunami Marine Debris (JTMD) program, and the following was accomplished in 2013:

- (1) The Commission's Public Education staff identified a local partner organization in each coastal county to hold regular beach cleanups at least once per season, especially at sites known to receive larger quantities of ocean-borne debris. Much of the funding was dedicated to mini-grants to support the work of each lead organization.
- (2) The Commission's Public Education staff (with assistance from NOAA) developed a simplified tsunami debris data card appropriate for volunteers. Staff also purchased and distributed beach cleanup supplies.
- (3) An online master calendar listed 60 different tsunami debris cleanup events along the coast of California that volunteers could join.
- (4) 4,700 volunteers statewide participated in the program.
- (5) A variety of potential tsunami debris items were found and reported to NOAA.
- (6) A baseline of data was established, which can be compared with future data to track trends in incoming debris.

III. PROPOSED FUNDING FOR FY2014/15 and FY2015/16

Pleased with the results of the previous \$50,000 grant, Cal OES has offered its remaining \$250,000 in NOAA funding to the Coastal Commission. The arrival of any extremely large tsunami debris items, which would necessitate costly cleanups, appears increasingly unlikely, so Cal OES believes it would be the best use of its funds to continue to support volunteer beach cleanups to remove washed up marine debris, including items potentially arriving from the tsunami. Cal OES has accepted the Commission's proposal for these funds, which would accomplish the following:

- (1) Support an enhanced Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach program in California in the amount of \$125,000 per year for two years, beginning July 2014.

- (2) Continue the JTMD program with existing county coordinators who are able to continue, and with new coordinators where needed.
- (3) Award mini-grants to each county to support their JTMD cleanups, totaling \$75,000 per year for two years.
- (4) Purchase and distribute needed cleanup supplies.
- (5) Hold regular JTMD cleanups at least once per season for two years. The Coastal Cleanup Day event would count as the fall cleanup each year.
- (6) Continue to publish a master statewide calendar of tsunami debris volunteer cleanups, and conduct statewide outreach and publicity.
- (7) Track data on items collected and compare data between years to assess tsunami debris impacts.

IV. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT AND SUBVENTION CONTRACT

In order to receive the \$250,000, the Coastal Commission must enter into an interagency agreement with Cal OES, which has already received the tsunami debris funds for the State of California.

The staff recommends passing through this \$250,000 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 \$250,000, including issuing \$150,000 in mini-grants over 2 years.

The motion is on page 1 of this staff report.