

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W6i

**DATE:** August 28, 2018

**TO:** Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

**FROM:** John Ainsworth, Executive Director  
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director  
Christiane Parry, Public Education Program Manager  
Sylvie Lee, Grants Program Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** **Modifications to guidelines for WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Competitive Grants.** The Executive Director recommends that the Commission approve a modification to the application guidelines for the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Grants Program.

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## SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the following changes to the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grant guidelines:

- (1) Add a new subcategory for smaller-capacity organizations working with underserved communities.
- (2) Offer a grant category for shoreline cleanups in general rather than only official Adopt-A-Beach<sup>®</sup> programs.
- (3) Add language further clarifying existing criteria.

## I. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

### Motion:

*I move that the Commission authorize the modifications to the guidelines for the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Competitive Grants Program as described in the staff report dated August 28, 2018, Item W6i.*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote on the foregoing motion. Passage of this motion will result in authorization of Coastal Commission staff to begin using the modified selection criteria when soliciting proposals in Fall 2018. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

### Resolution:

*The Commission hereby approves the newly modified guidelines for WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grants as described in the staff report dated August 28, 2018, Item W6i.*

## II. INTRODUCTION

The Commission's WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grants offered by the Public Education Program support projects that educate and involve the public in the protection of marine and coastal resources. A large portion of the Public Education Program's annual budget is distributed through local assistance grants to nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies for this purpose. The funding is awarded in two different grantmaking cycles each year through recommendations to Commissioners by the staff: some of these funds are awarded as targeted grants in the late summer or early fall, and the rest of the funds are awarded in the winter through a competitive grants process. The Commission approved guidelines for the competitive grants program in 1998 and approved some modifications in 2009, 2013 and 2017. In 2018, the staff is proposing making new modifications as described below.

### **Adding a new subcategory for smaller, more grassroots organizations**

With the goal of making WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grants more inclusive and accessible to grassroots organizations without a great deal of experience applying for funding opportunities such as this one, staff proposes adding a new special subcategory of funding just for organizations that work with underserved communities and have limited capacity and staff (as measured by their annual operating budget). Having a special subcategory will help ensure that some of the grant funds are allocated to organizations such as this, when they might otherwise have trouble competing with larger organizations with greater staff capacities. Staff will also continue offering a webinar for prospective grantees during the application period. The webinar will provide tips and guidance on completing the grant application.

### **Expanding support of shoreline cleanup and enhancement programs**

Historically, the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grants program has always offered a funding category for supporting California Adopt-A-Beach<sup>®</sup> programs. While the grants have regularly funded these programs, the number of applications received for this category is usually small and the potential pool of applicants is limited. Staff proposes expanding this category to include California shoreline cleanup and enhancement projects more generally, rather than limiting it to official Adopt-A-Beach<sup>®</sup> programs.

## III. Staff Recommendations for WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Grant Guidelines

The staff recommends that the following changes be made to the WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> grant guidelines so they would read as follows:

**Categories of Grants:** The WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Grants Program will fund projects that fall into any one of the following three categories: 1) Adopt-A-Beach shoreline cleanup and enhancement programs (such as Adopt-A-Beach); 2) youth education programs; 3) programs for educating the general public. In addition, applicants ~~may have the option to~~ request funding under ~~a two~~ special subcategoryies: a) for projects addressing climate change as it relates to the ocean or coastline and/or ocean acidification; and b) grants for organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or less, working with underserved communities. (See examples of underserved communities under selection criterion #2 on page 3.)

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTING GRANT RECIPIENTS

**1. Educational ~~Component~~ Impact (and/or Environmental Improvement) (25 points):** We are seeking Pprojects with funded under this program should have a strong educational impact that feature high-quality educational component involving the marine and/or coastal environment. We encourage experiential, hands-on learning and incorporation of stewardship, where possible. The project’s educational content and mode of delivery should be age-appropriate and culturally relevant for the target audience. Community Pprojects aiming to improveing the quality of beaches or coastal or marine habitats will also be considered as well scored favorably like those emphasizing educational impact.

**2. Need (15 points):** Projects will be assessed on the degree to which they address an identified need (educational, ecological, social, etc.). Projects that reach audiences who are traditionally underserved in terms of marine education, including low-income populations, multicultural communities, and residents of inner city or rural and/or inland areas, are especially encouraged. Proposals for underserved audiences should explain how the target population is underserved in terms of marine education.

**3. Project Concept (30 points, potentially up to 35 points):** We seek thoughtfully developed ideas, technically sound concepts, and creative, innovative, culturally competent approaches. Project design that reflects research-based best practices are encouraged. The degree to which a project could potentially be expanded or continued after the grant ends, and/or build organizational capacity, will be considered. The degree of impact relative to cost will also be evaluated. Up to an additional 5 points of extra credit will be awarded if the project will have a ripple effect beyond the project itself, by providing useful tools or knowledge to others in the field, helping to advance the field into new areas, or building fruitful collaborations with other entities.

**4. Proposal Content and Project Implementation (30 points):** The proposal should demonstrate that the concept has been fully thought out and developed into a concrete, feasible project with clearly stated, realistic goals and measurable objectives; a defined audience; a workable project design; and a clear plan for implementation. A sensible plan for evaluating the project’s success should be included, as should detailed and accurate cost information. The likelihood of the project’s successful implementation and completion will be considered, including the likelihood that project objectives and goals will be achieved, as well as the strength of the organization’s track record, and the qualifications and capabilities of project personnel.

## RULES FOR GRANT AWARDS

Conditions for grant awards will include the following:

- Grantee agrees to put the California Coastal Commission’s funding credit logo on any ~~promotional materials printed or online content~~ produced for the program, including linking from the logo to CCC webpages as appropriate.
- Grantee agrees to hold the California Coastal Commission harmless.
- ~~Grantee agrees to use waiver of liability forms developed by the California Coastal Commission (or the equivalent) where appropriate.~~

## WHALE TAIL<sup>®</sup> Grant Guideline Modifications

- Funds cannot be used to purchase food, beverages, prizes or cash gifts, insurance, or items that will be sold.
- Projects may be of any length as long as funding concludes by April 15, 2021.
- Amount in grant for indirect costs must be capped at 10% of amount in grant for employee salaries and benefits.