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April 26, 2017

Press Release:
**Ocean Protection Council Adopts Resolution Incorporating
Latest Sea-Level Rise Projections**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Today, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopted a resolution acknowledging a recent science report as a foundational piece for updating the State's Sea-Level Rise Guidance and directing staff at the Ocean Protection Council to begin the policy update, which will help state and local agencies incorporate sea-level rise into their decision-making.

The report was written by a Working Group of the OPC's Science Advisory Team, in coordination with Ocean Science Trust and summarizes the latest in sea-level rise science and projections, including the potential impacts on California from rapid ice loss from the Antarctic ice sheet.

The report includes new information on the expected sea-level changes that will occur based on different greenhouse gas emission scenarios. For example, with very successful mitigation efforts, the report states that there is a 67 percent probability that the Bay Area will experience sea-level rise between 1.0 foot and 2.4 feet by 2100. However, if no significant mitigation efforts are taken, that range increases to 1.6 to 3.4 feet.

The report also emphasizes the importance of preparing for extreme scenarios involving the rapid loss of the Antarctic ice sheet, which would have an enormous impact on global sea level rise and local sea level rise along our coast, bays, and delta. In one such scenario, sea levels along California's coastline could rise up to 10 feet by 2100 – about 30-40 times faster than sea-level rise experienced over the last century. Although the likelihood of these extreme scenarios remains undetermined, scientists are working now to better understand the various physical drivers associated with ice dynamics, and to address not if, but when loss of the Antarctic ice sheet will occur.

"This latest scientific report on sea-level rise off California should be of concern to all Californians," stated California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird. "It's not just the possibility of the seas rising a few feet in the next century—it's what happens when there are extreme storms that magnify the difference. Our ongoing efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions could significantly help safeguard local communities and important infrastructure. However, this report indicates that no matter what, sea levels will rise off California's coast; it's just a question of how much. We must lower our greenhouse gas emissions *and* we must plan and take action with regard to the rising sea level."

Going forward, the updated guidance will provide a framework for decision-making. It will be used by state agencies and local governments to inform their planning, permitting and investments.

As the report suggests, there is no "one-size-fits-all" sea-level rise projection for California. Selecting the appropriate projection will depend on the location, type of project, its anticipated life span and ability to adapt to risings seas, and the potential economic burden of addressing future impacts resulting from increased sea-level rise. Sea-level rise planning for a coastal power plant will not the same as planning for a coastal trail. In some cases, there will be more at stake, with scenarios that merit a more precautionary and conservative planning approach.

To ensure the updated guidance provides information in a way that is useful for decision-making, OPC will lead an inclusive public engagement process to solicit input from agency staff, planners, consultants, vulnerable communities, tribes and others. OPC, in partnership with Ocean Science Trust, will host three upcoming public workshops: May 16 in Los Angeles, May 22 in San Francisco, and June 8 in Eureka. An additional workshop in San Diego will be scheduled shortly. For more details, please visit: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/climate-change/updating-californias-sea-level-rise-guidance/>

The final sea-level rise guidance document will be presented to the Ocean Protection Council for approval at its January 2018 meeting.

About the California Ocean Protection Council:

The Ocean Protection Council is a state agency whose mission is to ensure that California maintains healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coastal ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. The Council was created pursuant to the California Ocean Protection Act, which was signed into law in 2004 by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. For more information, visit www.opc.ca.gov.

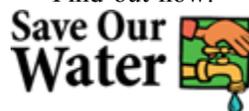
About the California Ocean Science Trust:

The California Ocean Science Trust is a nonprofit organization established by the State of California to build trust and understanding in ocean and coastal science. Serving as a liaison between governments, scientists, and citizens, the Ocean Science Trust supports decision-makers with sound, independent science. For more information, go to www.oceansciencetrust.org.

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