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**Ocean Protection Council Adopts Updated Guidance on Sea-Level Rise**  
*Document Helps State and Local Agencies Incorporate Future Impacts into Planning Decisions*

SACRAMENTO -- The Ocean Protection Council (OPC) today adopted the 2018 update of the [State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance](#), which provides bold, science-based guidance to help state and local governments analyze the risks associated with sea-level rise and incorporate sea-level rise into planning, permitting, and investment decisions.

“Scientific understanding of sea-level rise is advancing at a rapid rate, and the latest data should be a concern to all Californians,” California Natural Resources Secretary and OPC Chair John Laird said. “Rising sea levels pose an immediate and real threat to lives, livelihoods, infrastructure, transportation, the economy and ecosystems in California, and our decisions must reflect that reality. We have an opportunity now to make smart, informed decisions that prepare our coastal and inland communities for change.”

The document summarizes the best available sea-level rise science and modeling from the 2017 peer-reviewed report, [“Rising Seas in California: An Update on Sea-Level Rise Science.”](#) It includes updated sea-level rise projections, an extreme sea-level rise scenario caused by rapid ice loss from the West Antarctic ice sheet, and a recognition that the projections may change in the future. It also lays out preferred approaches for sea-level rise planning and adaptation that prioritize protection of vulnerable communities, coastal habitats and public access; consider acute increases in sea-level rise caused by storm surges, El Niño events and king tides; and incorporate climate change impacts into project design and planning.

State and local decision makers can use the document to identify projections and potential impacts and develop strategies to mitigate hazards and increase resiliency based on factors such location, lifespan of a given project, sea-level rise exposure and risk tolerance.

OPC developed the 2018 guidance in close coordination with a policy advisory committee including representatives of the California Natural Resources Agency, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, and the California Energy Commission. OPC also collaborated with state coastal management agencies and other members of the state’s Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California’s Climate Action Team. In addition, OPC solicited input from coastal stakeholders including local governments, regional and federal agencies, environmental groups, Tribes and others.

## Background

OPC's Sea-Level Rise Guidance was initially developed in 2010 and updated in 2013. The 2018 document reflects recent policy and legislative directives focused on improving climate adaptation and resiliency in California at both the state and local level, including Governor Brown's Executive Order B-30-15 directing state agencies to factor climate change into their planning and investment decisions; SB 379 (Jackson) of 2015 requiring local governments to incorporate climate adaptation and resiliency strategies into their general plans; and SB 246 (Weickowski) of 2015, which established the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program within the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

Earlier this year, the California Natural Resources Agency released the [Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update](#) detailing state actions and strategies to adapt to a changing climate. Later this year, CNRA and other agencies will release California's [Fourth Climate Change Assessment](#), which will include more than 50 reports on expected climate change impacts in California.

More information about the state's climate change adaptation efforts is available at <http://resources.ca.gov/climate/safeguarding/>.

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