

State Lands Commission August Meeting Highlights



The Commission held its August public meeting at the Port of Long Beach, one of the largest Ports in the nation, located within one of the largest cities in California. The Mayor of Long Beach, Robert Garcia, welcomed the Commission and expressed the City's gratitude for its many years of collaborative work. At the meeting, the Commission issued dozens of leases, permits, and agreements and authorized other actions for the use and occupation of the State lands and resources. Below is a snapshot of some of the significant Commission actions that occurred during the meeting.

Port of Long Beach

The City of Long Beach was granted sovereign tide and submerged lands in trust in the early 1900s. A portion of the City's grant includes the Long Beach Harbor District. The City, through the Port of Long Beach, is a trustee of the sovereign tide and submerged lands located within the Long Beach Harbor District. The Port of Long Beach provided the Commission with an update about its Clean Air Action Plan. Port staff noted that the zero-emission goals and Clean Truck Program received a lot of attention when the Plan was being developed. They also noted that the Clean Air Action Plan sets out ambitious goals and are accompanied by a lot of challenges. Key focus areas in the Plan include implementing the Port's Clean Truck Program and technology development to ensure equipment that meets the Port's needs.

Resolution to Advance a Vision for California's Coastal Future

The Commission adopted a resolution to advance a vision for California's coastal future and directed staff to take appropriate actions on behalf of the Commission to affirm its commitment to the protection and responsible economic use of coastal habitats. The Commission's resolution is a vital part of the Hope for the Coast campaign that was launched at the Governor's 2018 Global Climate Action Summit. Coastal habitats and beaches are among the State's most valuable resources. Temperatures are soaring each year, and California is grappling with the devastating effects of wildfires. Access to beaches and the coastline are cherished and essential. The State's major investments to date are imperiled by sea-level rise and climate change. The Commission's resolution demonstrates its commitment to science-guided, collective action, and to maintain and enhance California's coastal habitats in the face of sea-level rise and other climate change-induced challenges.

Environmental Justice

The Commission was updated about the status of staff's work to develop a comprehensive and meaningful environmental justice policy and about a community roundtable staff hosted in Contra Costa County in August 2018. The purpose of the Contra Costa roundtable was to solicit feedback about the Commission's draft environmental justice policy and learn about priority issues for communities in the greater Solano and Contra Costa areas. Commission staff also used the opportunity to share information about its leasing practices for industrial, commercial and recreational uses within and along the San Pablo Bay, Suisun Bay, and the Carquinez Strait. After the staff presentation, the Environmental Justice Working Group, a group of organizations advising the Commission, provided feedback about the Commission's revised draft environmental justice policy. The Group complimented the Commission for its work to date and on developing a comprehensive policy. The Group urged the Commission to embed the building blocks for successfully implementing the Plan into the Policy. They noted that there is a critical need for environmental justice representation and competence within the Commission, and for having environmental justice champions who have decision-making power.

Scripps Institution of Oceanography

The Vice Chancellor of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography provided the Commission with an informational presentation about the blue economy and how it relates to the Commission's authority and jurisdiction, such as the environment, conservation, research, and education. Elements of the blue economy include food resources, fisheries, aquaculture, transportation and global trade. Energy and mineral resources are other major blue economy sectors, as is the interaction between freshwater ecosystems and ocean ecosystems. The Vice Chancellor elaborated about emerging opportunities and challenges associated with the blue economy and the importance of relying on the best available science. Marine technology, for example, is a rapidly growing area with potential to address a wide variety of conservation and environmental quality issues. The Vice Chancellor noted that elevating the importance of the blue economy and a holistic approach is appreciated and important. Many elements of the presentation dovetail with the Commission's and the Port of San Diego Ocean Planning Partnership to collaborate on an ocean planning Pilot in the ocean space offshore San Diego County.

Martins Beach

The Commission authorized its Executive Officer to accept and deposit donations into a new Martins Beach Subaccount. The Subaccount, created by the Legislature in July 2018, is intended to create a funding mechanism to help open up public access at Martins Beach in San Mateo County. There was robust public comment about the importance of restoring public access to Martins Beach.

Other Highlights

The Commission heard public comment about the lack of public access to a roughly 8.5 mile stretch of coastline at Hollister ranch in Santa Barbara County. Speakers urged the Commission to help facilitate public access at this location. These comments came in the wake of a letter the California Coastal Commission sent asking the State Lands Commission to explore all available options to advance implementation of the Coastal Commission's Hollister Ranch Public Access Program. The Commission's Executive Director reported that staff has already started exploring its options and intends to report back to the Commission at a subsequent meeting.

The Commission also authorized its Executive Officer to award and execute agreements to hire consultants to pursue the preparation of a Lake Tahoe Rent Methodology Study and to analyze Public Trust grantee submitted sea-level rise assessments, and made a series of findings related to the future development of seawall lot 322-1 located on legislatively granted lands in the city of San Francisco.