

A CONVERSATION ON FUNDING FOR OCEAN AND COASTAL CONSERVATION

Neal Fishman, California Ocean Protection Council

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Ocean management is broadly underfunded. With new emphasis on marine protected areas, long term biological monitoring, large ecosystem restoration projects, and increasing enforcement, funding needs have dramatically increased. As these funding needs have increased, several questions arise:

- Who should pay for ocean and coastal management?
- What level of government is appropriate for each task?
- What role should public/private partnerships play?
- Should states or the federal government levee new taxes or fees and should they be paid for by consumers or producers?
- Can costs be controlled?

Join a lively café conversation where we can discuss approaches to funding ocean and coastal management over the next few years. We will discuss all of the following:

- How are funding efforts faring at the state and federal levels for ocean and coastal conservation?
- Can we convince the new federal administration to make coastal and ocean conservation a priority?
- Given current economic conditions, do these activities produce jobs and economic activity that can be used as arguments to Congress? Will they be part of an infrastructure program?
- Will conservation ride a new wave of taxes and fees, or will it be jettisoned as so much more marine debris fouling the halls of Congress and statehouses around the country?

We will start the conversation with a discussion of the California situation as the state's needs and opportunities are legion. We will briefly discuss how California, although nearly broke, has obtained funding to put forward a vigorous program of coastal and ocean management. This has included installing a high frequency radar array along its entire coastline, mapping its seafloor, beginning restoration of over 30,000 acres of wetlands, and establishing marine protected areas.

After discussing California's future prospects the floor will be opened to others to talk about funding sources, successes and failures, and whether or not the light at the end of the tunnel is conservation hog heaven or an oncoming train.

We will role play about who should pay and who benefits. Come armed and dangerous.

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Neal Fishman
California Ocean Protection Council
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612
nfishman@scc.ca.gov
510-286-4175