



## CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

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Susan Golding, Public Member  
Geraldine Knatz, Public Member  
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### **Resolution of the California Ocean Protection Council Regarding Ocean Observing**

WHEREAS, oceans and coastal waters affect all our lives – driving weather and storms, influencing climate, providing transport for millions of tons of cargo, and sustaining coastal and marine resources; and

WHEREAS, the Nation’s coastal and Great Lake regions are home to more than half the nation’s population, but lack basic information to protect those communities and their environment, to track, understand and predict change, and to provide quality information to those who work on or near the water;

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) to ensure that California maintains healthy, resilient, and productive ocean and coastal ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, understanding the changing ocean environment and how coastal ecosystems respond to such changes is vital for swift, confident, and effective management; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed the [Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation Act](#) of 2009, which established the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) as a program in NOAA and recognized the eleven regional systems, including two in California; and

WHEREAS, the deployment and operation of a sustained IOOS will: (1) improve the safety and efficiency of marine operations, (2) improve prediction of weather and natural hazards (including tsunamis and storm surges) to reduce resulting damages and costs, (3) improve predictions of climate change and its socio-economic consequences, (4) improve national security, (5) reduce public health risks, (6) help protect and restore healthy ecosystems, and (7) sustain and restore living marine resources; and

WHEREAS, implementation of IOOS will require a substantial sustained investment in research, infrastructure, evolving data products, system enhancements, and operational support of real-time information, carried out through a strong state-federal collaboration; and

WHEREAS, many elements of a national system are already in place, but most now operate independently, and the IOOS would combine these elements into an interconnected coastal network;

WHEREAS, monitoring ocean surface currents is a core component of IOOS, and the 5-year implementation strategy [National Surface Current Plan](#) identifies supporting existing infrastructure as a primary initial objective; and

WHEREAS, California has invested \$21 million to build the infrastructure for the [Coastal Ocean Currents Monitoring Program](#) (COCMP), a 55-station, land-based high-frequency Radar (HF Radar) system to map ocean surface currents along California's coastal waters up to 150 km offshore, 24/7/365, regardless of weather, visibility or time of day; and

WHEREAS, COCMP is operated by the California's two Regional Associations for ocean observing the [Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System](#) (SCCOOS) and the [Central and Northern California Coastal Ocean Observing System](#) (CeNCOOS) but currently lacks ongoing operational support.

NOW, THEREFORE, the California Ocean Protection Council hereby:

FINDS that the U.S. and the world are facing critical decisions about management of the oceans, coastal waters, and fresh water resources, and improved data and predictions resulting from IOOS is needed to support these decisions and provide for a sustained recovery of all marine ecosystems; and

FURTHER FINDS that understanding and tracking the physical, chemical and ecological processes that underpin many ocean issues requires an observing system that includes targeted observations of ocean surface currents, ocean temperatures and salinities, dissolved chemical constituents, and the structure, function and resilience of coastal marine ecosystems, including the human component.

RESOLVES to strongly encourage the continued development, implementation and maintenance of a responsive and integrated observing system in California, across the country and around the world; and

FURTHER RESOLVES to continue to devote resources, as available, and cultivate collaborations with federal, state and regional government agencies and educational and research institutions that maintain and develop ocean monitoring capabilities, and to continue to seek out opportunities to leverage funding for expanded observations at regional, state and federal levels; and

FURTHER RESOLVES to continue to support the development of the SCCOOS and CeNCOOS as regional centers of expertise for ocean observing; and

FURTHER RESOLVES to work with Congress and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to substantially increase IOOS funding for regional observations, and to implement the recommendation in the Surface Current Mapping Plan, and specifically to support ongoing operation of California's HF Radar Network; and

FURTHER RESOLVES to better communicate the need for and benefits from an integrated ocean observing system to decision-makers, advisory bodies, managers, and the public.