

# Staff Report 56

## **PARTIES:**

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California State Lands Commission

University of California, San Diego

## **PROPOSED ACTION:**

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Consider granting authority to the Executive Officer to enter into an agreement, under the appropriate procurement method, with the University of California, San Diego, to procure the services of two science policy fellows through the California Sea Grant State Fellows Program

## **DESCRIPTION:**

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The Executive Officer requests authority to enter into an agreement with the University of California, San Diego, which administers California Sea Grant (CASG), to procure the services of two science policy fellows through CASG's State Fellows Program. The State Fellows Program is an opportunity for graduate students who are interested in marine resources management and policy to be placed in a 12-month, full time fellowship with host government agencies. The Commission has hosted State Fellows through this Program every year since 2012. The Fellows' expertise and scientific knowledge greatly benefit the Commission's activities and programs. For example, past Fellows have participated in and advanced some of the following initiatives:

- Sea level rise and climate change guidance and online viewing tool
- Offshore renewable energy policy and interagency collaboration
- Assembly Bill 691 compliance and coordination
- Environmental Justice Policy
- 2021-2025 Strategic Plan

For the 2023 fellowship year, it is expected that the Fellows will continue the scientific and policy work of prior Fellows and assist staff in new initiatives as they arise.

Expected tasks for the 2023 Fellows include:

- Assisting with developing and implementing policy for nature-based adaptation strategies, sea level rise planning, and preparing for climate change impacts; developing and facilitating climate change and sea level rise education and resources for Commission staff based on recent science and new policy developments; and participating in interagency policy groups such as those for implementation of the state climate adaptation strategy, sea level rise work plan, and a public trust coordination project with the California Coastal Commission.
- Supporting and participating on interagency policy teams related to marine and coastal planning and management projects including offshore wind (implementation of Assembly Bill 525 and the State-Federal Interagency Renewable Energy Task Force), west coast regional ocean planning partnerships, platform decommissioning, aquaculture, and pollution prevention.
- Assisting with research and supporting efforts related to tribal engagement; participating on the Commission's Environmental Justice implementation team to ensure integration of environmental justice and equity into Commission actions; and supporting the Commission's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Team (JEDI) to develop initiatives to embed justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion into the Commission's programs, practices, and culture.
- Assisting with identifying opportunities to organize and facilitate staff training and education related to the Commission's Environmental Justice and JEDI efforts, coordinate the Commission's internal Equity Matters newsletter, and assist with efforts to review and update the Commission's racial equity action plan.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:**

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### **AUTHORITY:**

Public Resources Code Section 6106; Government Code section 11256; State Administrative Manual section 1200 et seq.; State Contracting Manual, Vol. 1 (rev. 4/22), Section 3.18.

**STATE’S BEST INTERESTS ANALYSIS:**

The recommended action, granting authority to the Executive Officer to execute an Agreement with the University of California, San Diego, to hire policy fellows through the CASG State Fellows Program, is in the State’s best interests. The Fellows provide specialized scientific and policy support to the Commission and its staff in furtherance of the Commission’s mission, vision, and programs. Some of these Fellows may later join the State workforce with directly relevant experience in State operations, which will benefit the people of California.

**OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:**

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1. Authorization to execute an agreement with the University of California, San Diego, is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act because it is an administrative action that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21065 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15378, subdivision (b)(5).

2. This action is consistent with the “Leading Climate Activism,” “Prioritizing Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice,” “Meeting Evolving Public Trust Needs,” “Committing to Collaborative Leadership,” and “Building a Reimagined Workforce” Strategic Focus Areas of the Commission’s 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

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It is recommended that the Commission:

**STATE’S BEST INTERESTS:**

1. Find that the recommended action is in the best interests of the State.
2. Find that execution of an agreement would benefit the Commission by enabling the Commission to participate in the CASG State Fellowship Program and gain the expertise and services of the selected fellows.
3. Find that this limited-term placement for educational purposes is of such a temporary nature that the delay incumbent in the implementation under civil service would frustrate the purpose of the program.

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Authorize the Executive Officer or her designee to execute an Agreement, under the appropriate acquisition method, with the University of California, San Diego, in accordance with the Public Contract Code and current State policies and procedures.