

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400

**2021 SEA GRANT FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL****CLIMATE CHANGE EMPHASIS****CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION****Overview**

The California Coastal Commission (Commission) implements the California Coastal Act of 1976 and has regulatory authority over development along the coast in balance with the protection of coastal resources, environmentally sensitive habitats, and public access. This work is carried out through land use planning and permitting. The Commission is an independent, quasi-judicial state agency whose authority is defined as the coastal zone, a 1.5 million-acre area stretching 1,270 miles along the state's mainland coastline from Oregon to Mexico, and around nine offshore islands (333 miles of island shoreline). The Commission also has the responsibility to work with local governments to establish Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) which, when certified by the Commission, become the land use plan basis for coastal permitting at the local level. Furthermore, the Commission has the purview and planning responsibility to assess and address issues of state-wide importance such as sea level rise and coastal erosion and the implications of these on Coastal Act resources. Both sea level rise and coastal erosion will be exacerbated by climate change.

Position Description

The Sea Grant Fellow will be exposed to and work on a broad range of coastal and ocean issues that are part of the Coastal Commission's regulatory and Local Coastal Program planning work throughout the coastal zone. He/she will have a unique opportunity to assist executive, management and policy level staff in the headquarters and district offices of the Coastal Commission on a variety of coastal and ocean resource protection issues with a special emphasis on climate change and sea level rise adaptation planning. The fellow will also have the opportunity to interface directly with senior government officials and leaders in resource management policy throughout California. Fellow work products, potentially including presentations and collaborative work on reports with the Coastal Commission and with other state agencies, especially the Resources Agency, the State Lands Commission and the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), will be highly visible. The Sea Grant Fellow may work with the OPC to help coordinate/staff efforts to improve interagency collaboration on California's marine protected areas, climate change and other issues to be determined.

More specifically, a Sea Grant Fellow with the Coastal Commission will support the executive and senior policy and technical staff in its broad state-wide climate change policy work, participating in multi-agency meetings, serving as a communication conduit between the Commission and other state agencies, drafting Commission recommendations for state-wide planning documents, and assisting the Commission in developing or enhancing projects including those that are done in cooperation with other state partners. The role of the fellow may include support on large-scale team projects and likely several smaller independent projects which the fellow will contribute to and manage parts of.

Projects/activities that the fellow will be expected to work on would include:

- 1) Assisting in review of climate-related documents such vulnerability assessments, adaptation plans and other technical reports in support of land use plan development for Local Coastal Programs and regulatory work on coastal development permits;
- 2) Supporting outreach and education efforts to local governments, other state agencies, stakeholders and the public about the Commission's climate and sea-level rise planning efforts, policy guidance and other products and tools. This work could include assisting with updates to the Commission's website and with planning outreach events such as webinars and workshops;
- 3) Assisting with Interagency Coordination and Collaboration. As described above, the fellow would support Commission staff efforts done in coordination with other state agencies to implement, track and report on climate adaptation and other sea level rise planning efforts;
- 4) Supporting various climate-related special projects as outlined in the Coastal Commission's Strategic Plan, including federally funded projects related to sea level rise adaptation planning, public access, environmental justice and protecting public trust lands and resources;
- 5) Assisting with policy work related to advancing wetland protection or restoration efforts or other nature-based solutions in response to coastal hazards; and
- 6) Supporting completion of the Commission's Coastal Armoring Database Project.

Given the wide range of projects and initiatives undertaken by the Commission along the entire California coast, a successful Sea Grant Fellow at the Commission must be willing to take on and deliver products for a range of projects. While there will be an expected emphasis on climate change related projects for most assignments, there will be opportunity for the fellow to dig more deeply into topics of interest (such as environmental justice); assignments can be customized to match the unique skills of the selected fellow. The fellow will also be exposed and have the opportunity to work on core elements of the Commission's program such as review of coastal development permit applications and land use planning documents. The selected Sea Grant Fellow must be able to work well under minimal supervision and be willing to ask questions. In addition, possessing an entrepreneurial spirit, having strong personal initiative and an ability to work well in a collaborative style with others is a great plus.

The Coastal Commission senior management has broad experience and success in hosting fellows and giving them a wide breadth of experience in coastal management issues. The Commission has a team of staff members focused on climate change issues. This fellowship offers an excellent opportunity for teamwork and peer collaboration for a Sea Grant Fellow. As requested by OPC, the Coastal Commission is prepared to cover the required share of the fellowship stipend above the contribution made by the OPC and a percentage by Sea Grant and to supply needed operational, travel, and transit subsidy costs.

Host Location

California Coastal Commission
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Fellowship Supervisors

Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Michelle Jespersen, Federal Programs Manager

Point of Contact for California Sea Grant, Prospective Fellows, and Finalists

Susan Hansch
susan.hansch@coastal.ca.gov
(415) 904-5244