



State Lands Commission February 2019 Meeting Highlights

The Commission held its first meeting of 2019 in Sacramento. This year, for the first time in its 80-year history, the California State Lands Commission is represented by all women. Eleni Kounalakis, a former U.S. Ambassador to Hungary under President Barack Obama and the first woman in California to be elected as Lieutenant Governor, is Chair of the Commission. Betty Yee, California State Controller and the tenth woman in California history to be elected to statewide office, is a member of the Commission. Keely Bosler, Governor Newsom's Director of Finance and former Cabinet Secretary and chief deputy director for budget in the Finance Department, is the third Commission member.

Below is a snapshot of several significant Commission actions that occurred during the meeting.

Strategic Plan Update

The Commission was briefed about implementation of its five-year Strategic Plan and accomplishments in 2018—year three of implementing its Strategic Plan. Staff presented a summary of the Commission's many notable accomplishments in 2018, and previewed key priorities in the year ahead, including helping California transitioning away from fossil fuels, promoting sea-level rise preparedness, providing the highest levels of public land management and public access, and advancing environmental justice and social equity—just to name a few.

Wheeler North Reef Expansion Project: Southern California Edison Lease

The Commission authorized a lease amendment to construct and maintain the offshore Wheeler North Reef Expansion Project in Orange County near the city of San Clemente, revised the annual rent, certified a subsequent Environmental Impact Report, and adopted a mitigation monitoring program. The reef project is necessary to comply with performance standards in the applicable Coastal Development Permit issued by the California Coastal Commission. Construction is expected to occur over about 130 days between May and October 2019.

Marine Invasive Species Program

The Commission approved a report to the Legislature, the *2019 Biennial Report on the California Marine Invasive Species Program*. Staff noted that the Report comes in the wake of Congress passing the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, which has significant implications to the Commission's Marine Invasive Species Program. The Report summarizes vessel traffic and vector management patterns, Program accomplishments, the challenges the Program faces, and next steps to continue scrupulously protecting State waters from nonindigenous species introductions.

State Legislation

The Commission directed staff to work with the Legislature to develop legislation relating to California's ballast water discharge performance standards, authorize the Commission to sample ballast water and biofouling for research purposes, update the definition of Pacific Coast Region, and make technical, cleanup changes to the Marine Invasive Species Act. The Commission also voted to sponsor legislation to address the decommissioning of offshore oil and gas facilities to better protect the State of California. The legislation will clarify the conditions the Commission considers when reviewing an application to assign, transfer, or sublease an offshore oil or gas lease, and will clarify when a lessee or operator accrues decommissioning obligations—among other things.

New Offshore oil and gas Development in Federal Waters

The Commission voted to support proposed federal legislation to permanently prohibit new oil and gas leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf off the coast of California. The legislation, H.R. 279 by Congressman Carbajal and H.R. 310 by Congressman Huffman, are intended to prevent new offshore oil and gas development in the Pacific coast region and signal opposition to the federal government's misguided efforts to open this offshore area to new oil and gas development. The Commission emphasized the catastrophic peril that new offshore oil and gas development present to California's environment and economy, and its commitment to continuing its unwavering, strenuous opposition to new offshore oil and gas development in federal waters.

Future Meetings

The Commission's next meeting will be on March 21, 2019, in Southern California and will include consideration of a lease amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Report for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) Units 2 and 3 Decommissioning Project.