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NEW YORK

# COASTAL STATES ORGANIZATION

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TO: Ocean and Coastal Community  
FR: Brian Baird, Chair, Coastal States Organization  
Kristen Fletcher, Executive Director, Coastal States Organization  
RE: Call for Action

The Coastal States Organization (CSO) is a 35 member organization of coastal states, territories, and commonwealths dedicated to the health and well being of the nation's ocean and coastal resources. As a result of U.S. Congressional committee staff observations that the ocean and coastal community is not speaking with one voice to advocate for the large-scale needs for ocean and coastal resource management, CSO has crafted a Call for Action to focus national attention on priorities for the ocean and coastal community. CSO has identified three top priorities for protecting our oceans, coastlines, Great Lakes and estuaries, and seeks support from you as part of the nation's ocean and coastal community.

The attached Call for Action presents three significant actions at the federal level:

- \*Establish a national ocean trust fund to provide new money to support ocean and coastal management
- \*Obtain support to state and local governments in their efforts to address the impacts of climate change
- \*Support the re-authorization of a strong national Coastal Zone Management Act.

It was recently endorsed by the California Ocean Protection Council and numerous partners including the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, Northeast Regional Ocean Council, Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, California Coastal Coalition, Ocean Conservancy, Sierra Club, The Otter Project, Save San Francisco Bay Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Defenders of Wildlife, Planning and Conservation League, Center for the Future of the Ocean, and Natural Resources Defense Council. Representative Sam Farr (D-CA) also supports the Call for Action.

We request that you endorse the Call for Action which can serve as a mechanism to focus the next Administration and Congress on a select set of achievable actions in the near term. Other individuals and organizations throughout the United States including federal, state, regional, and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, partnerships, the private sector, and various associations are also being asked to provide their support.

Upon endorsement, please notify the Coastal States Organization (via email to Kristen Fletcher at [kfletcher@coastalstates.org](mailto:kfletcher@coastalstates.org)) and appropriate members of the administration, congress, and other interested parties in order to engage a national dialogue on these critical ocean and coastal priorities.

We are happy to partner with you in this effort and to discuss opportunities to raise the profile of ocean and coastal issues on the national stage.



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## **Please support this call for action to protect the invaluable natural resources and the economic significance of our nation's oceans and coasts!**

In 2004, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy alerted the nation to systematic failures in the protection and management of the nation's coasts and oceans. What's at stake: the environment, jobs, the economy, and human health and safety. The Pew Oceans Commission put it simply: "America's oceans are in crisis and the stakes could not be higher." Both Commissions recommended bold new visions for protecting coastal and ocean resources and related businesses, but the national response has been inadequate. Projected impacts of climate change, especially accelerated sea level rise, have increased the urgency for action. Increasing development pressures along our coasts continue to raise new concerns about the health of coastal waters and habitats. National leadership to address these issues is essential. It is critical for the new Administration and the 111th Congress to take the following actions:

- 1. Establish a National Ocean Trust Fund**
- 2. Adapting to Coastal Climate Change**
- 3. Establish a New "Constitution" for the Coast**

### **1. ESTABLISH A NATIONAL OCEAN TRUST FUND**

*The next Administration and the 111th Congress should establish a permanent Ocean Trust Fund with a dedicated source of revenues, growing from \$1 billion per year to \$4 billion per year, as was recommended by both national ocean commissions, to support the management, protection, and understanding of the natural and economic resources along our nation's coasts, oceans, Great Lakes and islands.*

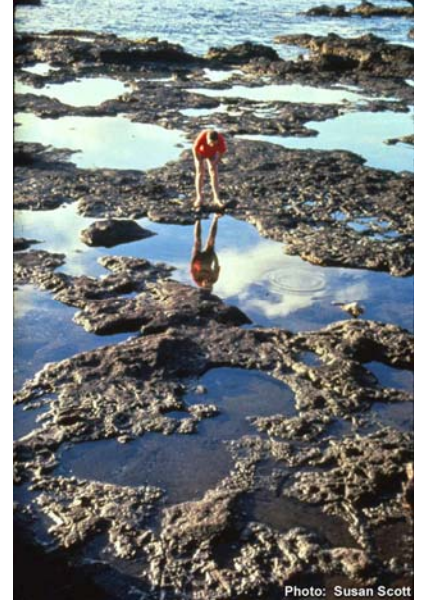


The Trust Fund will support the focused efforts of coastal states, territories and commonwealths, other appropriate coastal authorities, and federal agencies in addressing critical ocean and coastal science, management, and protection needs of our nation. The fund could be supported by revenues from such sources as unallocated federal revenues from offshore uses including oil and gas or alternative energy activities, and revenues from future carbon tax revenues and other sources. The Ocean Trust Fund should provide funds over and above existing appropriations to meet the increasingly complex and unmet needs of ocean and coastal managers.

## 2. ADAPTING TO COASTAL CLIMATE CHANGE

***The next Administration and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress should support state and local government efforts to prepare for the impacts of coastal climate change.***

Economic and environmental impacts of climate change are expected to be most severe in coastal and Great Lake areas of the United States due to accelerated sea level rise and lake level changes, increased shoreline erosion, heightened storm frequencies or intensities, and saltwater intrusion into coastal rivers and aquifers, among others. While mitigation of greenhouse gases is critical to minimizing future impacts, state and local resource managers have immediate responsibilities to plan for and adapt to these impacts, and must begin by assessing the severity and nature of impacts on coastal communities, industries, infrastructure and natural resources. However, states have significant mapping, monitoring, and research needs and need to strengthen state and local capacities for adaptation planning. This will require an unprecedented national investment and effort that will not succeed without the full engagement and support of the next Administration and Congress.



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## 3. ESTABLISH A NEW “CONSTITUTION” FOR THE COAST

***The next Administration and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress should establish a new “Constitution” for the nation’s coast through the re-crafting and re-authorization of a Coastal Zone Management Act that includes a bold vision for addressing the complex coastal issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.***

Our nation faces a looming coastal crisis resulting from increasing coastal populations and climate change. These shifts in the coastal zone pose a threat to coastal resources, infrastructure and economies, and the very health of the oceans. The Coastal Zone Management Act has created an innovative national partnership to address these issues but the time has come to take bold steps to craft a new national vision for ocean and coastal protection that will be both effective and efficient. This bold vision will set clear priorities, retain existing authorities, maintain and build onto existing programs, strengthen partnerships and assistance to local governments, and prepare for climate change and coastal hazards by focusing on protection and management.