

CALENDAR ITEM

43

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04/09/09

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CONSIDER APPROVING A GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUESTING FUNDS FROM THE NOAA COASTAL AND MARINE HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT GRANTS PROGRAM, WHICH WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009, FOR BEACH HAZARD REMOVAL IN THE COUNTIES OF SANTA BARBARA AND VENTURA.

BACKGROUND:

On February 17, 2009 United States President Barack Obama signed into law H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Act, also known as the federal stimulus bill, was based largely on proposals made by President Obama to provide a stimulus to the United States economy in the wake of the country's historic economic downturn.

In this Act, Congress has entrusted the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with up to \$170 million for "shovel ready" habitat restoration in coastal areas. NOAA is accepting applications for a variety of habitat restoration projects, including wetlands restoration, dam removals, shellfish restoration, and coral reef restoration.

Because NOAA's application deadline was April 6, 2009, the California State Lands Commission staff already prepared and submitted an application requesting funding under the Act for the Commission's hazard removal program in the Santa Barbara Channel. The hazard removal program's goal is to remove and eliminate man-made coastal hazards from state lands along the coast line of Santa Barbara and Ventura County. Some of these hazards are remnants of past oil and gas development, while others are the result of other types of development along the coast line. All of these hazards pose a potential threat to the environment and public health, safety, and welfare. The removal of these coastal hazards would make public trust lands safer for the public and environment, further the potential public trust uses of the coast, and help restore coastal and marine habitats. Additionally, this hazard removal program would help stimulate the economy by quickly creating numerous jobs—the program would begin within the first 90 days of the award start date.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

CALENDAR ITEM NO. **43** (CONT'D)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

APPROVE THE COMMISSION STAFF'S GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUESTING FUNDS FROM THE NOAA COASTAL AND MARINE HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT GRANTS PROGRAM, WHICH WAS AUTHORIZED BY THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009, FOR BEACH HAZARD REMOVAL IN THE COUNTIES OF SANTA BARBARA AND VENTURA.