

THE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA REGIONAL OBSERVING SYSTEMS

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS, the implementation of an U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) that includes a national backbone and regional observing systems that contribute to and benefit from the backbone requires coordinated development of California regional observing systems;

WHEREAS, two California regional observing systems, the Central California Ocean Observing System (CenCOOS) and Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS), are proposing to manage the design, implementation, operation and development of regional ocean observing systems;

WHEREAS, each California regional observing system will develop their own management plan to include a sustained commitment to comprehensive data archiving that is coordinated nationally as recommended by the Ocean.US Data Management and Communications (DMAC) Report;

WHEREAS, regional observing systems in California can receive funding from the federal government;

WHEREAS, the California regional observing systems will establish data provider (scientists and technicians from both private and public sectors) and user (government agencies, for-profit and nonprofit corporations, research and educational institutions) groups as essential components of advising the regional observing system management structure.

WHEREAS, these Data Provider/User Groups will be engaged to provide input in the design, implementation, operation and development of regional observing systems to ensure efficient provision of data and information that meet the needs of user groups;

WHEREAS, the California regional observing systems will establish checks and balances to harmonize input from the "grass roots" (individuals and institutions that constitute the providers and users) and the need for centralized coordination at both regional and national levels ("bottom up" and "top down" input);

WHEREAS, the California regional observing systems will establish mechanisms to secure and allocate funds, ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability, manage membership, grow the user base, resolve conflicts, and coordinate the development of an integrated system that builds on and incorporates existing assets to meet responsibilities described above and allow the successful evolution of the observing system.

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the regional observing systems of California will be the mechanism for federal agencies, involved in the IOOS, to work with institutions in the

regions (including local and state agencies, coastal zone management programs, etc.) to establish priorities and ensure that federal coastal observing programs are regionally and locally relevant.


WHEREAS, currently two distinct regions, central (CenCoos) and southern (SCCOOS) California are emerging as two separate regional observing systems;

WHEREAS, CENCOOS and SCCOOS hereby agree to work cooperatively to carry out the responsibilities and objectives stated above and below;

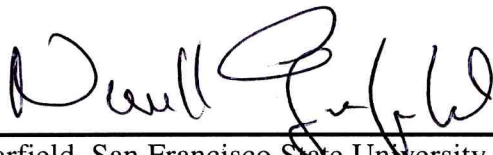
THEREFORE, be it resolved, that California's regional observing systems, SCCOOS and CENCOOS will work collaboratively to:

- Define, prioritize and coordinate issues to be addressed and related science requirements, in the form of a state wide master plan for implementing the coastal ocean observing systems;
- Promote and maintain statewide and regional interactions between and among data providers and users including government agencies (local, state and federal) and regional bodies as appropriate (e.g., regions established by NOAA (e.g. NWS and NMFS), and EPA); the scientific community; and other public and private entities as needed;
- Consistent with nationally established guidelines and criteria, develop standards and protocols for measurements, data management and communications, and products based on state and regional needs;
- Generate value-added products through public-private partnerships;
- Provide easy, open, and rapid access (e.g., through a "portal") to data and information on the coastal ocean;
- Foster research and development and the timely incorporation of new technologies and knowledge to improve the capacity of regional observing systems to meet societal needs;
- Collaborate on the preparation of proposals for the California State Coastal Conservancy current monitoring program to ensure full interoperability of installed systems;
- Develop or participate in programs to improve public awareness and education on the marine environment and marine ecosystems; and
- Establish mechanisms to minimize liability; and coordinate monitoring and research activities within the region and with adjacent regions by establishing an open and continuous dialog among data providers and users and for the purposes articulated above.

Signed:



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