



November 11, 2020

Dr. Clarissa Anderson
Executive Director
Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System
Scripps Institution of Oceanography
9500 Gilman Drive, 0206
La Jolla, CA 92093-0214

Dear Dr. Anderson:

On behalf of Birch Aquarium at Scripps, I enthusiastically endorse the valuable data and services provided by the Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS) at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego.

As you know so well, Birch Aquarium at Scripps serves as the public engagement center for Scripps Institution of Oceanography. In the year preceding the Covid pandemic, we served nearly 500,000 guests and over 50,000 K-12 students, with many underrepresented minority and low-income youth. Our website reaches well over a million people annually. We expect our reach numbers will rebound as we recover from the pandemic.

For the past ten years, Birch Aquarium has displayed a touchscreen kiosk with SCCOOS data, making a direct connection with the general public. With so much usage, the hardware is worn out and the software needs updating. With SCCOOS, we hope to create new ways to invite people to explore oceanographic data. Knowing what's happening along our coast supports human livelihoods and leisure.

At Birch Aquarium, we connect understanding to protecting our ocean planet. We draw on scientific and cultural knowledge to inform action, so we can co-create a healthy planet. Public engagement with SCCOOS data advances these goals.

As a science-based decision support system, SCCOOS collaborates with local, state and federal agencies, resource managers, industry, policy makers, educators, scientists and the general public to provide data, models and products that advance our understanding of the current and future state of our coastal and global ocean. SCCOOS focuses on coastal observations and product development to provide the information necessary to address issues on marine operations, coastal hazards, climate variability and change, and ecosystems, fisheries, and water quality.

Sustained funding for SCCOOS will be crucial to the maintenance of the program's ocean observing network and to the continuity of the important data products and services that these observations enable. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nan Renner, Ph.D.
Senior Director of Learning Design and Innovation
Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography
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