

SUMMARY: CeNCOOS Governing Council Meeting – December 2025

Virtual

Monday, Dec 1 at 11am-1pm

Overview: This meeting is intended to provide detail and build consensus for the 2026-31 CeNCOOS Proposal to NOAA-IOOS.

Quick summary: The meeting focused on planning for a new funding proposal, with discussions centered on the timeline for the NOFO release and the challenges of reducing current spending to align with the expected new funding levels. The Ocean Protection Council provided updates on their strategic planning and funding initiatives, including discussions of Prop 4 funding and various ocean science programs. NOAA representatives shared updates on their priorities and leadership changes, while the group reviewed budget allocations and funding structures for ocean observing programs. The conversation ended with discussions about governance and outreach subsystems, including plans for new membership and the approval of a budget proposal for CeNCOOS's coastal observations program.

Participants : Jaime J, Justine Kimball, Mary Miller, John Largier, Rosa Laucci, Eric Bjorkstedt, Laura R-B, Lynn deWitt, Raphe Kudela, Francisco Chavez, Liz Whitman, Alex Harper, Henry Ruhl, Jeff Payne, Ali Boutros

Meeting Agenda

11am	Call to Order, Welcome and Agenda Overview - Eric Bjorkstedt, Henry Ruhl
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11:05am

OPC & OST Updates

Justine Kimball, Ocean Protection Council

The segment focused on updates from the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), including their upcoming December 9th council meeting to discuss a new five-year strategic plan (2026-2030) and a proposed offshore wind science collaborative. Justine Kimball reported that OPC received \$54 million in Prop 4 funding, including \$20 million for the Senate Bill 1 sea level rise program, though they are still developing grant guidelines and cannot begin spending until emergency regulations are approved. OPC also approved a competitive solicitation for ocean acidification, hypoxia, and harmful algal blooms (HABs) worth \$6 million, with the RFP expected to launch in January, alongside a HABs control workshop scheduled for January 12-13. Justine provided updates on Proposition 4 funding, noting that while specific plans are not yet finalized, the strategic plan priorities will guide implementation of the \$135 million allocated for OPC, with \$7.5 million expected in FY25-26.

Liz Whiteman, Ocean Science Trust

OST reported on the Ocean Science Trust's work, including their partnership with the Ocean Protection Council and the development of a new coast and ocean report due in March, which will move away from scores and grades to better reflect the complexity of California's ocean environments. The group also discussed the West Coast Ocean Science Action Agenda, a regional partnership with Oregon, Washington State, and the West Coast Ocean Alliance, which aims to mobilize funding and resources for ocean science over the next decade.

<p>11:15am</p>	<p>IOOS & IOOS-A Updates Jeff Payne, Acting IOOS Director, NOAA Jeff Payne, the Acting Director for IOOS, provided updates on NOAA's priorities under Administrator Dr. Neil Jacobs, including advancing the ocean economy, modernizing observing systems, and enhancing numerical weather prediction. He highlighted the need to publish the new Regional Association Notice of Funding Opportunity and discussed efforts to improve environmental compliance processes, with additional staff and training initiatives in place. Payne also mentioned his upcoming retirement from his roles at IOOS and the Office for Coastal Management in NOAA. He also announced the elevation of Krisa Arzaus to Acting Director of IOOS.</p> <p>Henry Ruhl CeNCOOS and IOOS Association Henry provided a national-level update on FY26 funding, noting current challenges with budget passage and the need for continued outreach to Congress and OMB.</p>
<p>11:25am</p>	<p>CeNCOOS Update <u>Strategic Plan Update</u> - Alex Harper Alex presented the final revised Strategic Plan, which includes new visual elements such as an organizational chart and observing systems schematic. Graphics for a strategic communications strategy were nearly complete, with a soft launch expected by the end of the month.</p> <p><u>Engagement Update</u> - Ali Boutros Ali presented an update on CeNCOOS' engagement and outreach initiatives, highlighting their quarterly newsletters, social media efforts, and strategic communications work. She discussed recent projects including the "Voices of the Region" series, ocean acidification resources for fishers, and the implementation of coastal webcams through the WebCOOS initiative.</p>
<p>GC Members Only</p>	
<p>11:35am</p>	<p><u>Next 5-year Core funding proposal</u> - Henry Ruhl</p>

[1] 12:15	Discussion
[2] 12:45	Vote - Proposal budget and concepts Nomination for new GC membership
[3] 1:00pm	Adjourn

Relevant reading:

[CeNCOOS Strategic & Implementation Plan \(2025-30\) - near-final draft](#)

[IOOS NOFO FY21-26](#)

[SB1](#)

[OA/HAB RFP Guidelines](#)