

# **Refugio Beach Oil Spill Settlement: South Coast Shoreline Parks and Outdoor Recreation Grants Program: 2023 Request for Proposals Update and Proposed Project Summaries**

September 18, 2023

Prepared by:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), California State Lands Commission (CSLC), Regents of the University of California (UC Regents), collectively the “state Trustees”, & National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

On 19 May 2015, an underground pipeline ruptured near Refugio State Beach in Santa Barbara, California, spilling over 123,000 gallons of crude oil. Much of the oil flowed down a ravine under Highway 101 and entered the Pacific Ocean. The incident impacted birds, marine mammals, fish, and other species; closed commercial and non-commercial fisheries; and affected recreational uses like camping and beach use. The spill also impacted other human use activities, including research, education, and outreach at the University of California’s Coal Oil Point Nature Reserve. Following the spill, the natural resource Trustee agencies, including the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the California State Lands Commission (CSLC), the California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), the Regents of the University of California (UC Regents), as well as the Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the National Park Service (NPS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Department of Commerce through National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), conducted a Natural Resource Damage Assessment to quantify the injuries to natural resources. The Trustees executed a settlement with the parties responsible for the spill in October 2020.

As part of the settlement for natural resource damages, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) received more than \$1.7 million on behalf of CDFW, CSLC, CDPR, and UC Regents, the state Trustees, to fund projects that compensate the public for loss of use and enjoyment of public beaches, parks, and other public or natural resources in areas downcoast of El Capitan State Beach to Long Beach in Los Angeles County. Consistent with the [Final Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan for the Refugio Beach Oil Spill](#), and in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement among NFWF and the state Trustees, NFWF is implementing the competitive South Coast Shoreline Parks and Outdoor Recreation Grants Program with oversight by the state Trustees. A portion of the settlement funds are directed to

NFWF to pay the administrative costs of implementing this program.

A request for a first round of proposals (RFP) was released on October 18, 2021, with the goal of allocating up to \$1.5 million to projects. Pre-proposals were submitted by local cities, counties, tribal nations, and other public and non-profit entities. The eight pre-proposals best matching the grant program's funding priorities were selected for full proposal submission. Ultimately seven such full proposals were submitted. Of the seven, six full proposals totaling \$866,301 were selected for funding and are all currently being implemented.

A request for a second round of proposals was released on February 6, 2023, for the funds remaining in the areas of Coal Oil Point Nature Reserve, Ventura County, and Los Angeles County (Table 1). Pre-proposals were submitted by local cities, counties, tribal nations, and other public and non-profit entities. All eight pre-proposals that were submitted were selected for full proposal submission. Ultimately six such full proposals were submitted and review of these full proposals began on July 18, 2023.

Table 2 below provides a brief description of the six full proposals received and currently under consideration for funding through the South Coast Shoreline Parks and Outdoor Recreation Grants Program. While there are many deserving projects, funding the full amount requested will not be possible based on the funding limitations per locale category. Projects are being evaluated for funding based on their geographic distribution, total funding request, and other evaluation criteria listed in the request for proposals and found in the [Final Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan for the Refugio Beach Oil Spill](#) (p.59). Comments on the proposed projects are welcome and should be submitted to Eliza Braendel at [RBOSRFP@nfwf.org](mailto:RBOSRFP@nfwf.org) by October 27, 2023, in order to ensure consideration. The state Trustees will submit the list of projects selected for funding to the Refugio Beach Trustee Council, composed of representatives from USFWS, NOAA, CDFW, CDPR, CSLC, and UC Regents, for concurrence. Thereafter grant recipients will be notified.

Table 1. Funds Remaining in each Locale Category after 2021 RFP selections.

| <b>Locale Category</b>  | <b>Amount Allocated in 2021 RFP</b> | <b>Amount Remaining for 2023 RFP</b> |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Downcoast of El Capitan State Beach to Coal Oil Point           | \$208,500                           | \$0                                  |
| Coal Oil Point Nature Reserve                                   | \$0                                 | \$28,500                             |
| Santa Barbara County downcoast of Coal Oil Point Nature Reserve | \$514,500                           | \$0                                  |
| Ventura County  | \$93,301                            | \$205,199                            |
| Los Angeles County  | \$50,000                            | \$400,000                            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$866,301</b>                    | <b>\$633,699</b>                     |

Table 2. Proposed Project Summaries for 2023 RFP

| <b>Project Title</b>                                      | <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Project Description</b>  | <b>Locale Category</b>        | <b>Funds Requested</b> |
|---|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Improvement of the Pond Trail at Coal Oil Point Reserve   | UC Santa Barbara     | This project would improve the safety of the pond trail for visitors by removing 30 dead Eucalyptus trees and encroaching poison oak and installing new benches at selected viewing areas at the Coal Oil Point Reserve.                          | Coal Oil Point Nature Reserve | \$28,500               |
| Surfers' Point Living Shoreline Interpretive Path Project | Surfrider Foundation | This project would update and expand interpretive signage along the Ventura coastal pedestrian and bike path at the Surfers' Point Managed Retreat Project to improve awareness of local ecology, outdoor recreation, and nature-based solutions. | Ventura County                | \$35,604.41            |

| <b>Project Title</b>   | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Project Description</b>  | <b>Locale Category</b> | <b>Funds Requested</b> |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Beach & Launch Ramp Public Restroom and Shower Facility and ADA Upgrades | Ventura Port District | This project would provide upgrades to the façade, interior, outdoor showers, and ADA path of travel to the public restrooms at Harbor Cove Beach and Surfer's Knoll Beach and interior upgrades to the recreational public boat launch ramp restroom.  | Ventura County         | \$200,000              |
| Restoring the Wishtoyo Chumash Village                                   | Wishtoyo Foundation   | This project would restore the Wishtoyo Chumash Village in Malibu by expanding the public outdoor area, reconstructing traditional Chumash houses called 'aps, and updating their welcome center to adequately support visitors and enhance the cultural and environmental education programs offered at the Village. | Los Angeles County     | \$25,028.41            |
| Junipero Beach Sports Courts   | City of Long Beach    | This project would support the construction of a new roller skate area and full court basketball court including a seating area, shade structure, artistic murals, and new native dune landscaping at Junipero Beach.   | Los Angeles County     | \$150,000              |

| <b>Project Title</b>             | <b>Organization</b>          | <b>Project Description</b>   | <b>Locale Category</b> | <b>Funds Requested</b> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Ballona Freshwater Marsh Habitat | Ballona Wetlands Conservancy | This project would rehabilitate freshwater wetland habitat within an area of approx. 5 acres and repair approx. 3,000 linear feet of public access trails and fencing that were impacted by an unhoused encampment from 2020 - 2023 at the Ballona Freshwater Marsh. | Los Angeles County     | \$249,840              |