



# Memo

Date: May 27, 2021

To: Members of the State Coastal Conservancy

From: Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer  
Emely Lopez, South Coast Project Staff  
Fanny Yang, Central Coast Project Staff  
Erica Johnson, San Francisco Bay Project Staff  
Shalini Kannan, San Francisco Bay Project Staff  
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CC: Oversight Members

RE: Coastal Conservancy Prop 68 Inclusive Coastal Storytelling Grant Program

## Background

In 2018, REI convened a group of outdoor experts (including former U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, founder of Latino Outdoors Jose Gonzalez, and former Sonoma County Regional Parks Director Carly Hart) to discuss how to make the outdoors more inclusive. The takeaways from this expert group ran in an *Atlantic* piece titled [“Five Ways to Make the Outdoors More Inclusive”](#), which included such action items as “teach the full history of the American outdoors”. Conservancy staff discussions through the Conservancy’s Justice, Equity, and Diversity Committee led staff to explore where and how the Conservancy might be able to implement these recommendations for outdoor inclusivity. Staff identified the Conservancy’s existing role as a funder of public signage and other interpretive materials within the Conservancy’s jurisdiction as an obvious place to start.

The California Coast is a place of joy, relaxation, recreation, and healing that everyone has the right to enjoy. California’s coastal places and the San Francisco Bay area have been a home and a spiritual place for many communities for thousands of years. However, dominance of the European-settler perspective and exclusion of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and other communities in California’s history and storytelling on public lands has taught an incomplete history and made many feel unwelcome. Others are unaware of Indigenous roots and culturally diverse experiences of the coast. We must make

California’s coastal and shoreline spaces more welcoming and inclusive by amplifying the voices, perspectives, and relationships that have been largely missing.

Conservancy staff have set aside \$1,000,000 of Proposition 68 bond funds to launch a new program promoting inclusive histories, storytelling and representation at the California coast and San Francisco Bay Area. This program will fund projects throughout the Conservancy’s jurisdiction that develop and deliver storytelling installations and materials that represent Black, Indigenous, People of Color, Immigrant and other underrepresented voices that have been historically excluded in how the stories of America’s outdoor spaces are told. The Storytelling Grant Program’s aim is to create an environment in which outdoor spaces and associated interpretive centers feel welcoming for all.

Proposals that use creative forms of historical, ecological, and cultural storytelling will be encouraged. Projects should include perspectives that provide information unique to the outdoor space and help visitors understand the setting in relation to its ecological, cultural or historical contexts. Project products may include but are not limited to: signage and monuments, murals and other visual art installations, or audio tour content, maps and guides that expand on existing capital projects (i.e. existing public accessways, interpretive centers, or installations/education exhibits).

### **Proposition 68 Funding Allocation**

This new grant program will be funded by \$1,000,000 of Proposition 68 funds (the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018) which was approved by voters in June 2018. Consistent with the Conservancy’s Prop 68 Program Guidelines Project Requirements and Priorities, the grant program will fund improvements that “expand the use of multilingual and culturally appropriate materials in public communications and educational strategies.”

Consistent with the bond funding source and General Obligation Bond Law, projects funded under the program will be incidentally but directly related to the construction or acquisition of capital assets. This includes physical property with an expected useful life of 15 years or more, as well as equipment with an expected useful life of two years or more.

### **Proposed Grant Program Development Process**

Presenting this Memo to the Conservancy Board is the start of a process to develop this new Proposition 68 Grant Program. After this initial presentation to the Board, our next step is to incorporate any Board feedback and develop a draft Request for Proposals.

An update on the development of this grant program will be presented to the Conservancy Board at its September meeting. The anticipated grant program development schedule is outlined below.

| <u>When</u>  | <u>Description</u>                           | <u>Who</u>  |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| Winter 2021  | Initial program development and staff input  | SCC Staff   |
| May 27, 2021 | Present grant program concept to Conservancy | Conservancy |

|               |   |             |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| May-Sept      | Develop draft Request for Proposals                     | Conservancy |
| Sept 23, 2021 | Present grant program update to Conservancy             | SCC Staff   |
| Oct 2021      | Finalize Request for Proposals                          | SCC Staff   |
| Oct 2021      | Release Request for Proposals                           | SCC Staff   |
| Nov 2021      | Pre-Proposal submission deadline                        | Applicants  |
| Dec 2021      | Notify applicants for submission of Full Proposals      | SCC Staff   |
| Feb 2022      | Full Proposal Submission Deadline                       | Applicants  |
| Apr 2022      | Present select projects to the Conservancy for approval | Conservancy |