CEA ACTION PROPOSAL

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date: 9/29/2026

2. Department: California Coastal Commission

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Executive Division

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Director, South Coast

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (*2-3 sentences)*

The Commission's South Coast Deputy Director will oversee the agency's South Coast District planning and regulatory program, and supports the Executive Director and Senior Deputy Director, as needed. This additional leadership capacity is urgently needed to address the consistently higher level of workload in the South Coast District office. With this position, the Commission will transition from having four district directors (two in northern California and two in southern California) to five district directors (two in northern California and three in southern California). In the past, this Deputy Director position oversaw the Commission's Legislative and Public Information Units, which are also key parts of the agency's planning and regulatory program. However, those units are now being overseen by the Senior Deputy Director and also have strong manager-level leadership.

6. Reports to: (*Class Title/Level*)

Executive Director

7. Relationship with Department Director (*Select one)*

☑ Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.

☐ Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(*Explain*):

8. Organizational Level *(Select one)*

☐ 1st ☑ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

Working closely with the South Coast District Managers, this Deputy Director plans, organizes, assigns and reviews the South Coast coastal permits, permit appeals, LCP planning and other district-related planning and regulatory work. They review and approve staff reports and recommendations to the Commission for local coastal program certification and amendments, permit requests, and other statewide programs mandated by the California Coastal Act, and they regularly present these items to the Commission at public hearings. This CEA position is responsible for responding to questions and requests from the Commissioners, stakeholders and members of tribal, federal, state and local government, and members of the public, regarding the work of the Commission's South Coast District.

The CEA provides guidance to representatives of various government agencies having land use management and resource protection responsibilities within the South Coast District, including review and assistance with draft policy documents developed by outside agencies. The CEA also develops and maintains robust working relationships with non-governmental and community-based organizations, and tribal, state, federal and local agency partners to collaboratively advance the Coastal Commission's policy objectives.

Finally, the Deputy Director also ensures implementation of the agency’s Environmental Justice and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs in the South Coast district, participates in Tribal coordination and consultation, and works with executive management and administrative units to ensure the effective functioning of the South Coast district.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- ☑ Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- ☐ Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- ☐ Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The South Coast Deputy Director will be responsible for overseeing the planning and regulatory program of the Commission’s South Coast District Office, which covers Los Angeles and Orange County. They coordinate the Commission's partnership with local governments on local coastal planning and regulation, which is the core of the Commission’s program. They work closely with the Executive Director, providing strategic guidance and direction to help achieve the Commission’s goals and objectives in the South Coast district. Los Angeles and Orange Counties contain some of the state’s most densely populated areas and experience a high volume of development proposals and related activities. These counties also include numerous local governments that are still working toward achieving full Local Coastal Program (LCP) certification. The Deputy Director will be responsible for guiding and supporting these jurisdictions through the certification process. As such, this position is integral to advancing the Commission’s mission statewide.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

In the past, this Deputy Director position oversaw the Commission's Legislative and Public Information Units, which are also key parts of the agency's planning and regulatory program. However, those units are now being overseen by the Senior Deputy Director and also have strong manager-level leadership. Additionally, workload demands in Los Angeles and Orange Counties have grown substantially over the past decade. Recent changes to state housing laws, including AB 3093, SB 1077, AB 2097, SB 423, SB 10 and SB 9, have prompted a significant increase in development proposals, and have required extensive efforts from local governments in these two counties to update local land use plans and ordinances. All of this work is processed through the South Coast District office.

In addition, the district includes a large number of jurisdictions without certified Local Coastal Programs, which require the Coastal Commission to issue Coastal Development Permits directly. In Los Angeles County, the unique dual-permit structure—under which both the County and the Commission must issue permits—creates additional complexity and coordination demands.

The South Coast District office consistently manages a higher and more complex workload than other district offices. Given these sustained pressures, it is no longer feasible to operate without a dedicated Deputy Director assigned solely to this district.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

Working closely with the South Coast District Managers, this Deputy Director plans, organizes, assigns and reviews the South Coast coastal permits, permit appeals, LCP planning and other district-related planning and regulatory work. They are the principal policy maker for the region's Coastal Act implementation, include in areas related to coastal resource protection, hazards reduction and land use planning.

The CEA provides guidance to representatives of various government agencies having land use management and resource protection responsibilities within the South Coast District, including review and assistance with draft policy documents developed by outside agencies. The CEA also develops and maintains robust working relationships with non-governmental and community-based organizations, and tribal, state, federal and local agency partners to collaboratively advance the Coastal Commission's policy objectives.

This CEA will be the principal policy maker over local coastal program updates in Los Angeles and Orange counties, which are important to the state as a whole. Given that these counties are mostly urban cities with dense development in southern California, issues of housing, public access to the coast, including overnight accommodations and short-term rentals, and transportation will need specific attention and oversight.

Sea Level Rise
Sea level rise has the potential to significantly degrade our coastline statewide, leading to damage to life and property, as well as beaches and other recreational and coastal and waterfront industrial assets. Local governments, through their LCPs, and with the support of the Coastal Commission, are on the front lines of planning for sea level rise so that our coastlines can be resilient to sea level rise, reducing these impacts. With careful planning, development can be gradually moved out of harm's way, limiting risks to life and property, and infrastructure can be protected from coastal hazards.

Housing
California's ongoing housing crisis continues to exacerbate housing inequity and affordability, especially in the coastal zone, and especially in southern California. To address this critical issue, the state Legislature has enacted a number of laws in the last several years that are designed to reduce barriers to providing housing and to encourage construction of additional housing units in appropriate locations. Local coastal programs in the South Coast District need to be developed and updated to address these new laws.

Public Access
Public access to the coast is protected by the Coastal Act and California's constitution, and this position will have a unique role in ensuring that local governments, through their LCPs, protect access to the coast at the local level in Los Angeles and Orange counties. This includes ensuring that overnight accommodations are available for visitors of all income levels, and that transportation to and from the coast is readily accessible.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

The proposed South Coast District Director will oversee a broad scope of issues related to Coastal Act implementation in Los Angeles and Orange counties, which is work that requires a high level of decision-making authority and independence. This position will work closely with local government officials and will speak on behalf of the Coastal Commission to help facilitate and expedite planning and permitting in the South Coast District.

The Coastal Commission regularly deals with sensitive, high profile issues, and the CEA will at times be required to make quick, independent decisions, especially related to working with local governments on regulatory and planning matters. The position will advise staff, the executive team and Commissioners on Coastal Act issues in these two counties.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The CEA position will be both developing and implementing new policy, as well as interpreting and implementing existing policy. The Coastal Act is a state law with policies that the Commission interprets and implements in its regulatory oversight role over local governments. In addition, local governments, with the assistance of the Commission and this CEA, will be developing and implementing new policies to carry out the Coastal Act at the local level, given current circumstances, including the emergence of climate change and sea level rise, housing shortages, and ongoing challenges for the public to access the coast.