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# California State Legislature

SENATOR  
**HANNAH-BETH JACKSON**

NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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PUBLIC SAFETY  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
CALIFORNIA'S WINE INDUSTRY

July 13, 2020

Douglas Bosco  
State California Coastal Conservancy  
1330 Broadway, 13<sup>th</sup> floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

## **RE: Letter of Support - Goleta Kelp Reef Restoration Project**

Dear Mr. Bosco,

As the State Senator representing the 19th Senate District, which includes the City of Goleta, I am writing in support of the Fish Reef Project application for a California State Coastal Conservancy grant called, "**Goleta Kelp Reef Restoration Project**", designed to provide essential fish habitat and substrate for kelp, abalone, and other marine invertebrates. This project will create a productive rock-reef habitat in a degraded sandy bottom area just offshore of Goleta.

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 93% of California's kelp forests have declined or died in the past five years. In 2013, a mysterious wasting disease wiped out a large population of sea stars, which stopped the predation of sea urchins, and their population exploded in the following years. A primary food for sea urchins is kelp. Also, in 2014, a large patch of warm water developed off the California coast and persistent warmer sea temperatures have stressed the kelp forests to the point that growth and reproduction have slowed dramatically and caused further damage to remaining fronds and tissue. These negative effects reach from the ocean to the shore. Red abalone have been severely impacted by the loss of kelp and this lack of food, causing the abalone fishery to close.

Kelp forests are the rainforest of the Sea. Globally, the ocean absorbs roughly one third of the total carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) emitted by human activities every single year. Simultaneously, it has absorbed over 90% of the warming caused by humans since the 1970's (OPC Strategic Plan). Climate change and sea level rise present numerous challenges to Santa Barbara County, the City of Goleta and the State Parks system. In order to adapt, we must work cooperatively and in partnership with all agencies to restore this vital natural resource and monitor these changes over time. The University of Santa Barbara has expressed their support and this project can provide local research opportunities investigating the creation and

management of offshore reefs, and how they interact with the natural ecosystem in coordination with the monitoring for the adjacent Campus Point State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA).

This project proposes to create a rocky-reef habitat offshore on submerged lands located at the Goleta County Park in Santa Barbara County. Dams, upper watershed development and roadways have choked off the natural debris flow and any new rock that would have migrated to the ocean has been diverted, depleting the ocean of the natural reef. The kelp reef restoration project is located in a degraded offshore site that was used as a dumping ground after the Montecito mudslides in 2018. The project will place up to 300 tons of quarried rock from Catalina Island and 75 sea cave reef units placed on 2 acres of mud and sand offshore.

I urge the Coastal Conservancy members to give every consideration to this important Coastal Resiliency Project/ Reef Restoration Project that will help to restore a healthy kelp ecosystem and make our region better prepared for climate change and sea level rise.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "n" at the end.

HANNAH-BETH JACKSON  
Senator, 19th District