

CAPSule

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September 2013, Issue #13-09



SALARY EQUITY NOW!

Your CAPS Bargaining Team remains ready to complete negotiations for a new Memorandum of Understanding. Unfortunately, Governor Brown's negotiators refused to increase their offer even one nickel prior to departure of the State Legislature on September 13. That offer: just 4.5% for a three year contract. Consequently, there was no agreement on a new MOU. Rank-and-file state scientists will continue to work under the terms of the existing MOU. (Two other bargaining units — Attorneys in Unit 2 and Operating Engineers in Unit 13 — don't have a new MOU either.)

Virtually everything regarding pay and benefits for rank-and-file state scientists will remain the same, except lodging and meal reimbursements. Those increases in meal and lodging have been extended to state employees represented by unions which have reached agreement on a new MOU. But CalHR is denying state scientists those increases as one of its few means to leverage CAPS to agree to Governor Brown's contract offer. The increases are modest for meals, but quite significant for lodging in some areas of the state. Maximum lodging reimbursement for state scientists remains at \$84, while the basic rate increases to \$90 for others, and in some high-cost areas, the increase is between \$120 to \$150 per night. This could force state scientists to make a considerable out-of-pocket expense in order to do the state's work. Details have been distributed by all state departments, and can be found on the CalHR webpage: www.calhr.ca.gov.

Grievance Filed. CAPS has filed a grievance to extend these more generous reimbursement rates to all state scientists. In fact, we believe the language in our current MOU entitles ALL state scientists to these new rates.

Until this dispute is resolved, CAPS urges state scientists to avoid travel altogether when it involves an overnight stay exceeding \$84 per night. In some instances, departments are reportedly approving the excess reimbursement if notified in advance. BEFORE YOU TRAVEL on state business, review where you are staying. Obviously, try not to stay where you will incur an out-of-pocket expense that won't be reimbursed. Please document your experience and provide it to CAPS: caps@capsscientists.org.

Your CAPS Bargaining Team would prefer to operate under a new agreement. Unfortunately, the ONLY way to make that happen was to agree on a new MOU and Governor Brown's terms. The CAPS Team refused.

Identify and Solicit Influential Stakeholders. CAPS will continue to bargain in good faith during the coming months. The next 2-day meeting is scheduled for October 15 and 16. You can help keep the pressure on Governor Brown by urging your departmental management to support salary equity for state scientists. You can also help identify stakeholders that could be influential in supporting salary equity for state scientists.

Let us know which stakeholders YOU think will support state scientists in our quest for salary equity: caps@capsscientists.org.

As always, you too can write a personalized letter to Governor Brown: <http://www.capsscientists.org/Legislation/legislative-alert.htm>.



CAPS Leader In Spotlight. Important work deserves attention, not just fair pay. In this instance, CAPS Secretary Scott Bauer is pictured with famed television journalist Dan Rather, who interviewed Bauer for his HDNet show "Rather Reports." Bauer's day job as a DFW Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) is to help document the extreme detrimental impact of marijuana cultivation on coho salmon restoration efforts in Northern California. It has proven newsworthy of the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times* and *LeMonde* in Paris.

California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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Science is Critical to California's Future

By Stefan Lorenzato, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist, Department of Water Resources

Climate change. Growing population. Shrinking water supplies. Air and water pollution. Public health threats. Right now California is facing a litany of significant public policy issues that are enmeshed in science.

Our ability to provide fresh, clean water depends on science to define what is safe. We must figure out how to deliver water without destroying our natural environment. The sustainability of agriculture and our ability to provide high-quality food at affordable prices depends on science. Science helps us develop and protect the plants and animals we find in agriculture; to control the pests that could destroy those resources; and to ensure the viability of our soils for generations to come. Science ensures we avoid poisons, helps thwart sickness and infestations, and allows us to manage epidemics. Science helps craft emergency responsiveness and helps us define the tasks undertaken to minimize disaster losses and recover from disruption of our lives. It helps educate our people and define our commerce. Science is woven into every aspect of our daily lives.

Our state's intimate reliance on science often goes unnoticed. Yet our standing as a global economy, our ability to manage our infrastructure and support

local, state, national, and global markets all depend on skillful exercise of science to keep things humming along. And where does that science come from? It comes from universities, state agencies, and the private sector.

Our universities engage in seeking ever-greater clarification about how the world works, supported through a network of government and private sector funding. The private sector pursues science to provide competitive advantage in the market place. State government is charged with protecting public trust resources, defining the nature of trade-offs and balance among competing needs for resources, and protecting public health. All of which requires excellent science. State science also provides value and definition to the work of the universities and the private sector. Together this body of work provides an engine for innovation and safety in California.

Given this great dependency on science, it seems fair to ask: How is the State assuring that the best and brightest scientists are working on behalf of California taxpayers? Looking at the state budget one would have to conclude that we are not working toward this end. Currently, nearly half of California's state scientists are at retirement age and all are paid 25 to 37 percent below their counterparts at local, federal and private agencies and institutions. Meanwhile, state

and federal support for university research and work of non-profit corporations is on the decline. The private sector continues to push forward in a number of areas, but without the companion effort from the public sector, the value of private sector science is diminished.

For the past several years in California, much has been made of the need for fiscal responsibility. So it is fair that investments in science be weighed to find their value. However, neglecting scientific work needed by California has real and significant costs.

State support of science has been on the decline for over a decade. Consider it akin to a deferred maintenance plan, where one puts off important expenditures to accrue savings now, but suffers the inefficiencies and losses associated with a diminished capacity in the long term. Continuing down this path will lead to a loss of scientific expertise that the State cannot afford.

In response to recent media reports, the Governor's administration recognized a different instance of the deferred maintenance strategy at the Department of Water Resources. Employees critical to the success of the State Water Project were fleeing for higher paying jobs creating a staffing crisis. The state has agreed to pay those workers up to 37 percent more to keep them in state service. The same must be done to preserve scientific capacity in California.

The state is at a tipping point in its scientific competence. We can continue to pinch pennies and watch as our scientific know-how and ability wither away, or we can invest in science and re-establish the level of competency needed to prosper in the years and generations to come. Seeking to stabilize and improve our science is a marginal cost well worth the investment.

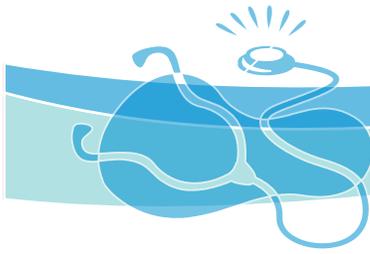
Editor's Note: Stefan Lorenzato is a Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist and the Riparian Habitat Joint Venture Coordinator with the Department of Water Resources.

EnCAPSulations...

State Legislature Wraps Up Session. Both the Senate and the Assembly worked late into the night September 12 to wrap up the session, focusing on a number of high-profile pieces of legislation. Not among them was the CAPS-supported bill, AB 881, which would raise the per-barrel fee that funds the Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) and the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN). Senate leadership turned AB 881 into a two-year bill apparently for the purpose of forcing a showdown with the oil industry over sustainable, long-term funding solutions for OSPR. The bill's failure could have a big impact on OSPR and CAPS members who work there. The fee is scheduled to drop to 5.5 cents per barrel in 2015. CAPS will work with the Brown Administration and the State Legislature to mitigate any damage and ensure funds are there to fulfill the mission and pay scientists in the years to come.



CAPS Helps New Scientist Move On UP! A state scientist was hired last July as an ES, Range A. However, her Master's degree in a science related field should have allowed her to substitute that degree for one year of experience and immediately start in Range B. After CAPS pointed this out to DTSC, the scientist was retroactively placed in Range B and will receive compensation for the difference.



Health Care Really Matters

By David Miller, President

I will never take my health care for granted in the future, and neither should you.

When I first joined state service, I was in my twenties. Health care was not really on my mind. It was enough that I was able to select a plan with a very low out-of-pocket cost—from several to choose from. Over the years, I have rarely utilized my health plan. When I did, I was generally satisfied with the service. I appreciate that the state picks up the lion's share of the premiums, and I place a high priority on maintaining our contribution formula at an 80% employer share. I never paid much attention to plan design, copays, the costs of services or medicines, availability of out of network providers, second opinions, or any of the myriad differences among the health care choices available to me as a CAPS member.

However, as I've gotten older, I have needed to use my plan more frequently, and for more than just routine health care services. I have begun to appreciate that all health care providers are not created equal. I began to pay closer attention to the quality of my patient experiences. When I added my spouse to my plan, I really started to become even more aware of the shortcomings of my plan, and the escalating costs of my premiums. What was once the ideal low cost option for a healthy young single scientist is no longer a bargain.

Recent experiences with my plan's high volume, high "efficiency" approach to health care service delivery has resulted in conflicting diagnoses, failures to provide timely and adequate care, insensitive and inappropriate communication, and a nearly complete loss of confidence in our provider's ability to address a serious, and as yet

unresolved, illness from which my wife is suffering. My plan no longer meets the needs of my family.

The take home lesson that I want to share with you is the importance of carefully reviewing your health care options. Review the specifics of the various plans available. Look for changes, compare plan elements and consider whether your needs have changed since you last selected a plan. Consider not just the cost of premiums, but also copays for services, the cost of medicines and availability of doctors, among other things. Consider doing some simple research to see how the various providers stack up in relative quality of outcomes, and patient satisfaction.

CalPERS' health plan open enrollment continues through October 11, 2013. Don't

take your health care choice for granted! Consider whether your current health plan choice is still the best for you and your family. Take a few minutes and look over the material that CalPERS sends to you with open enrollment information. Be sure that you are making the right choice—your health, or that of a loved one, may depend on it.

I am thankful that I will have the opportunity to enroll my spouse and myself with a provider that has a more patient-centric, integrated care team approach to delivering health care services. I appreciate that CAPS ensures my ability to choose from a variety of affordable plans.

I don't take my health care for granted any longer. Neither should you.

CalPERS Open Enrollment



Health & Dental

CalPERS members — that includes all state scientists — will find new options available to them during the health plan open enrollment period, which begins September 16. The retirement system will provide four additional Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) plans, bringing the total HMO offerings to six. Here are the options: enroll in the CalPERS Health Program, add eligible family members, or make changes to your existing health plan. Open enrollment ends October 11. The coverage becomes effective January 1, 2014.

CalPERS has added the four new HMO providers — Anthem Blue Cross, Health Net, Sharp Health and UnitedHealthcare. Blue Shield of California and Kaiser Permanente continue as CalPERS HMO providers. HMO availability will vary by county. CalPERS is offering an Exclusive Provider Organization to CalPERS members living in Monterey County. This includes the opportunity to access health benefits equal to those of CalPERS members enrolled in an HMO benefit plan. Anthem will continue to serve as the third party administrator for the System's self-funded Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) health plans. CalPERS offers an online tool called the Health Plan Chooser for members who need help selecting a health plan.



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS

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Sacramento, CA 95814

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CAPSule (ISSN 10446230) is published monthly by the California Association of Professional Scientists, 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500, Sacramento, CA 95814. Periodicals Postage Paid at Sacramento, CA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 500, Sacramento, CA 95814-2483.

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2013 CAPS Outstanding Young Scientist. On September 13, CAPS selected Ailis Dooner as the Outstanding Young Scientist for 2013. This brilliant 16-year-old junior from Carmel High School was selected for her project titled ***Targeting Lung Mutagenesis***. Pictured front row left to right are Pravin Ravishanker of Bellarmine College Prep in San Jose, Ailis Dooner of Carmel High School, and Andy Meyers of Villa Park High School in Orange County. Back row are CAPS Board Members David Miller, Valerie Chenoweth-Brown, Marty Berbach, Patty Velez, Mark Commandatore and Margarita Gordus.