

CAPSule

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New Tentative Agreement

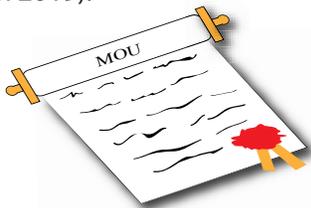
Prior to casting your vote on the Tentative Agreement between CAPS and Governor Brown, the CAPS Bargaining Team wants to make sure that you are fully informed.

Balloting will commence with mailing of ballots on September 18, a return deadline of October 5 (U.S. Mail only — no drop-offs), and a count on October 6. The **BALLOT COUNT** will be at 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 125, Sacramento. Observers are welcome (members only). Balloting will be conducted by TrueBallot, the independent firm which excels at comprehensive, independent and impartial balloting services. Only ballots from CAPS members will be counted, so if you aren't currently a CAPS member, please join immediately. You can do that online: www.capsscientists.org.

Worksite Meetings are being scheduled prior to balloting, and will include one or more members of the Bargaining Team. We look forward to a comprehensive, frank and civil discussion. See that schedule on the CAPS webpage.

Highlights of the MOU:

- Three general salary increases for every Unit 10 scientist: 5% on July 1, 2016; and 5% on July 1, 2017; 5% on July 1, 2018.
- Contribution by every Unit 10 scientist of 2.8% for post-retirement health benefits starting in 2017. The contribution is back loaded and implemented over three years (0.7% in 2017; another 0.7% in 2018; and 1.4% in 2019).



- Increase in the voluntary annual cash-out of accrued vacation/annual leave, from 20 hours to up to 80 hours, based on availability of funding.
- Continuation of employer contributions for health benefits pursuant to the "80/80" funding formula.
- Higher lodging reimbursement amounts for three Bay Area counties, and an increase in the mileage reimbursement rate for piloted airplanes used on state business.
- Prevents mandatory unpaid furloughs through the 2017 fiscal year.
- Maintains and continues other agreed-upon benefits currently provided for in the CAPS MOU.

For more, see the CalHR legislative summary:

<http://capsscientists.org/wp-content/uploads/CalHR-Legislative-Summary-.pdf>

Salary Equity NOW! The **goal** of the CAPS Team was — and is — Salary Equity for ALL State Scientists. This TA doesn't restore full salary equity, and yes, the Team officially supports the Tentative Agreement as required in the ground rules.

See What Your Colleagues Are Recommending. There are two new threads on the CAPS Discussion Forum, one for VOTE YES! and one for VOTE NO! Feel free to visit, express yourself (within the rules of conduct please), or just read what others are saying: www.capsscientistsforum.org.

California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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CAPS Files Concur Grievance

On September 11, CAPS filed an organizational grievance on behalf of all state scientists regarding problems associated with the implementation of the Concur travel reservation program. The Department of General Services issued a memo in Spring of 2014 that mandated the use of Concur Travel System across all state departments. The mandatory use of the system has caused many Unit 10 Scientists greivous difficulty in making timely, safe and cost-effective travel plans in order to do the state business.

CAPS called upon all state scientists to submit stories regarding their experiences using the Concur Travel System for travel reservations. CAPS received many stories, positive and negative. The cons definitely outweighed the pros. The list of complaints was long but there were four main problems: limited availability of suitable lodging, health and safety concerns with hotels available on the Concur System, personal security concerns with the use of a personal credit card within the system and inability to update travel plans on the road.

The Statewide Travel Program Management contacted CAPS after they were informed of the forthcoming grievance. The STP has offered to meet-and-confer to resolve problems. CAPS will meet and work to address the issues. But the grievance will remain pending until major problems are resolved. It took the grievance to get DGS to reach out to CAPS, something it promised to do much sooner. The main problem appears to be the fact that it's mandatory for employees in several state departments. CAPS' goal is to improve the program for all concerned through the grievance and meet-and-confer processes.



www.capsscientists.org

Find information important to your employment and professional life on the CAPS webpage. Here are a few of the things you can do on the page:

Join CAPS. Fee payers can join for full membership online for just **\$5.00** more per month.

Apply for a Dependent Scholarship. Any CAPS member with a dependent in college, or bound for college the next Fall, may apply for a \$500 cash scholarship to help with college costs.

Apply for a CAPS Grant. CAPS grants three quarterly education grants of \$300 each to qualifying CAPS members. The purpose is to support scientific research and professional development not fully funded by the state.

Get an Insurance Quote. Liberty Mutual Insurance has a special discount for CAPS members on auto and homeowners insurance, all with the convenience of payroll deduction.

Purchase Optional Insurance Benefits. Apply for competitively priced term and long term disability insurance via The Standard, an "A"-rated insurance company. This is in addition to the \$5,000 basic and \$5,000 accidental death and dismemberment coverage provided to every member free of charge with membership.

Get Discounts on Theme Park and Consumer Items. Members receive savings at theme parks such as Knott's Berry Farm, Six Flags Magic Mountain and dozens more. Consumer discounts on car rentals are also available.

Information on CAPS Activities. Information is updated regularly on bargaining, Like Pay for Like Work, legislative issues, retirement and CAPS lawsuits.

Bookmark www.capsscientists.org and visit often!

Please VOTE!

We write this on behalf of the entire CAPS Bargaining Team to help ensure that you are well informed as you consider and cast your vote on ratification. No matter your position on the new Tentative Agreement, it's very important that you cast your ballot, which will come to you via US Mail soon.

Yes, the CAPS Team did agree to officially support the TA, thus allowing YOU, the membership, the opportunity to vote on it. We thought collectively that ALL CAPS members should see Governor Brown's final offer. All members should have the chance to vote it UP or DOWN.

Understand that the CAPS Team was committed from beginning to end to ensure that ALL state scientists received Salary Equity. We told CalHR that, and we meant it. ALL of us deserve professional respect and salary justice.

While we are both personally VERY disappointed Governor Brown didn't deliver full Salary Equity, the Team remained unified to ensure that any increase proposed was applied equally to EVERYONE. We're also cognizant of the fact that if CAPS returns to the bargaining table, it's much better to do that if the TA is rejected by the entire CAPS membership, not just a five-member Bargaining Team. Governor Brown needs to know that.

During past rounds of contract bargaining, CalHR has proposed piecemeal adjustments in order to reach tentative agreement. Recall the paltry 1.5% increase proposed for Senior Tentative Agreement. That was resoundingly rejected by the members, as we thought it would be.

In order to avoid any last-minute suggestion satisfy the need for salary equity, the CAPS like increases in safety boot reimbursement, society dues — all badly needed. But it Team insisted that the basic adjustment 2015, the CAPS proposal would restore the entire bargaining unit, and you can find

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that a few nickels here or there might Team didn't propose any "extras." Things geographic differentials, professional starts with salary, and that's why the apply to everyone. Effective August 1, horizontal and vertical salary integrity to a summary on the CAPS webpage.

Also please recognize that the CAPS salary relationship between Senior ES Specialist and proposal starts with restoring the equal salary ES Supervisors. Before last summer, these two classifications were paid almost exactly the same. Once that's restored, it's easy to build around it, something the CAPS salary proposal did pretty well.

There was only one change in the CAPS salary position. That was very late in the process and only after CalHR refused to implement the Reclassification and Pay Program, with the attendant new salary ranges. It was a four step phase in for equity, with annual raises of 13%/10%/10%/10% respectively.

There has been some discussion about what the TA would cost if ratified. You can find the state's fiscal analyses via the CAPS webpage, one by CalHR and the Department of Finance, and one by the Legislative Analyst Office.

I hope all of you can attend one of the worksite meetings we've tried very hard to schedule in a timely manner. See that schedule via the CAPS webpage as well: www.capsscientists.org.

Finally, a HUGE thanks to our fellow bargaining team members for what were very difficult negotiations: CDFW Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist **Margarita Gordus** from Fresno; North Coast Regional Water Board Environmental Scientist **Stormer Feiler** from Santa Rosa; and Food and Ag Environmental Scientist **Ryanne Mason** of Sacramento. And a big thanks to our staff, **Chris Voight** and **Bianca Gutierrez**, who actively help guide us in the process.

Thanks again for your patience and support.

Patty Velez
Bargaining Chair
Vice President

David Miller
Bargaining Team Member
President



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Accident Takes CDFW Environmental Scientist

Fish and Wildlife Environmental Scientist Rhianna Lee recently died tragically while working with her horses near Sonora/Columbia. CAPS is working to ensure her beneficiary realizes the CAPS term life insurance benefit as soon as possible. Here's a note from CDFW: *"Rye was a vibrant and enthusiastic member of the Wildlife Branch's Nongame Wildlife Program in recent years coming from the Timber program in Region 2. She was a positive and forward-moving force for wildlife conservation; always treating others with kindness and respect, and ever desiring to have a positive impact and assist her coworkers. Rye was an avid backcountry horsewoman and always looked forward to getting away into the mountains. It is stunning to be reminded how quickly life's plans can, or could, change. She will be missed and Rye, her family, and friends will be in our thoughts and prayers."*

CAPS extends its condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Ms. Lee. This is also a reminder of how suddenly and unexpectedly tragedy can strike. Perhaps it's a good time to ensure your own estate plan is in good order.