

CAPSule

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MARCH FOR SCIENCE APRIL 22, 2017

On February 4 the CAPS Board of Directors acted to endorse and actively support CAPS and its members in the April 22 March for Science. CAPS encourages members to attend a March. Already they are being planned for 18 major California cities and locations. Hundreds of Marches are being planned nationwide, and 40 in other countries. CAPS' efforts are being coordinated by the Member Action Committee chaired by Director David Rist of DTSC (drist@capsscientists.org).

The CAPS Board took this action after carefully considering the impact these Marches may have on the public opinion of the role of science in support of fact-based public policy and of scientists generally. Members were also asked to take an online poll which tabulated whether members approve of CAPS' support for these Marches, and whether the member intends to participate in such a March. Results are viewable instantaneously. They are overwhelmingly in favor of CAPS' participation in, and support for, these Marches, and for their intention to march in one of them.

CAPS' participation is rooted in its support for fact-based decision-making in the adoption of public policy in critical areas such as public health and the environment. While these Marches have been initiated by others, it is a reflection that a large segment of the general population supports fact-based science and the scientists who do the work. We expect them to be well attended and peaceful. There are likely to be other political and social messages expressed at these Marches. Nevertheless, CAPS will be working hard to ensure that our message is seen and heard, and that state scientists are recognized.

Other actions by the CAPS Board:

- ★ **CAPS Local Reps.** CDFA ES Todd Yee and CDFW ES Justin Garcia were both approved as the newest CAPS Local Reps. Local Reps interface with CAPS leaders and staff on issues of importance. THANKS Todd and Justin for your willingness to serve!
- ★ **Local Rep Changes.** The Board adopted changes to the CAPS Bylaws and Policy recommended by the Representation Committee that strengthen the role of CAPS Local Reps. The changes are viewable online in the current manuals.
- ★ **Political Action Long Range Plan.** The CAPS Board approved a spending plan for the CAPS PAC that focuses on getting a scientist-friendly governor elected in place of Governor Brown in the November 2018 General Election.
- ★ **June 3 CAPS Board of Directors Meeting.** The CAPS Board will meet next on Saturday, June 3 at the Holiday Inn Sacramento – Downtown Arena, 300 J Street, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Parking in the adjacent parking garage is validated at the hotel's front desk. **All members are welcome!**



California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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ES Specialists Deserve Supervision By Technical Experts



On March 17, 2017, lawyers for CAPS will head to the Sacramento Superior Court to argue that the state needs to follow its own classification plan and preserve the peer relationship between Senior Environmental Supervisors and Specialists. The Senior ES Specialist class (formerly called “Staff Environmental Scientist”) grew from a need to offer promotional opportunities and recognition to scientists with significant technical expertise who weren’t interested in the supervisory tasks that, while necessary, might take them away from their technical focus. Through several iterations of the Environmental Scientist classification specifications, the Supervisor and Specialist versions of Senior Environmental Scientist were described as two sides of the same coin.

In documents submitted to the State Personnel Board proposing changes to the ES series for the Board’s consideration, the two Senior positions were described always as reporting to the Environmental Program Manager I class. This was true in 2001 when the “Staff Environmental Scientist” position was renamed and true again in 2013 when the State Personnel Board made changes to the ES class series unrelated to the internal reporting relationships within the class. The actual court filing can be found on the CAPS webpage and includes supporting material from 2001 and 2013.

Subsequent to the large 2014 salary increase for Senior ES Supervisors, the Department of Fish and Wildlife published a memo stating their intent to use the Supervisors to supervise their peer Specialists. This was a unilateral change to the reporting structure enshrined in the State Personnel Board-approved class structure – a change not condoned, nor even considered, by the State Personnel Board itself.

The California State Constitution and state law clearly vest the State Personnel Board with the sole authority to create classifications – including reporting relationships within them. Simply put: it’s wrong for CalHR and DFW to violate the State Constitution. Additionally, CAPS sees potential for state departments to avoid providing promotional opportunities to CAPS members if they are allowed to avoid allocating or filling EPM I positions. They may think they are saving money in the short term, but in the long run, we know they risk making it even harder to retain qualified scientists by closing off their career paths.

CalHR and DFW are trying to take advantage of the salary inequities that exist between the Supervisory and Specialist classes. But that salary inequity doesn’t override the State Constitution. CAPS will keep fighting for Senior ES Specialists and to preserve their appropriate reporting structure.

EnCAPSulations



New Spots Posted on Public Website. New CAPS media spots have been posted on the calscientists.org website, including one that includes Governor Brown discussing the value of science. To hear them, and others as new spots are added, go to www.calscientists.org.



Schedule Your Professional Development Days. The CAPS MOU provides every rank-and-file state scientist with two days per fiscal year for professional development activities as defined by each employee. Time off is requested and approved in the same manner as vacation/annual leave and may be used in fifteen (15) minute increments. Your PD days for 2016-17 **must** be used by June 30, 2017 or they will be lost. **Use them or lose them!**



Updates to Bylaws and Policy Online. The CAPS Board of Directors updated the CAPS Bylaws and Policy again on February 4, 2017. The changes have been

adopted and are reflected in the Bylaws and Policy Files now on the Members Only Section of the website. The password is currently “Winter.”



Legislative Reception and Lobby Day Success!

On February 7 and 8, CAPS leaders and Local Reps descended on the state Capitol to urge state lawmakers to support salary equity for all State Scientists, and to speed up Administration efforts to reform state civil service. A legislative reception on Tuesday evening was followed by dozens of meetings with state lawmakers and their staffers the next day. These events were well attended and brought the CAPS agenda to the forefront of dozens of legislators and gubernatorial appointees.

Selected photos appear on the back panel of this issue, and many more are posted on the CAPS Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/capsscientists/albums>.



MARCH for Science!

By Patty Velez, President

The March for Science wasn't my idea, but I am very happy someone thought of it. I'll be marching on April 22, and you should too!

As of February 8, there were 165 separate marches planned nationwide, and 18 in California. That number is bound to increase as time passes. The beauty of it is that long before these Marches were planned, we launched a statewide media campaign to get more attention for State Scientists. We want the public to better understand who we are and the work we do. So it comes as a welcome surprise that due in large part to the election of Donald Trump, a groundswell of public opinion has rallied behind scientists in all sectors, supporting the importance of science-based research to explore and help solve a wide range of problems facing society—even the future of humankind on this planet. The time is exactly right to take advantage of what is likely to be a worldwide event.

On February 4, the CAPS Board of Directors voted unanimously to encourage members to March on April 22. We will be directly supporting the March in Sacramento and at other locations where our members need assistance, such as materials noting that Science Matters, and that California State Scientists are standing up and speaking out for fact-based public policy.

Meanwhile, there are those who think that "politicizing" science could backfire. Before asking our members to vote on this matter we cited a *New York Times* article written by a scientist making that very point. Still, the results were overwhelming -- CAPS members want CAPS to participate and take a lead role. We will do that wherever possible.

One sentence in a similar article caught my attention: *"...It could further politicize science, and further embolden conservative opponents to tune out scientists' concerns."*

The role of science couldn't be any further politicized among our conservative opponents. I'm not particularly concerned about them, because denying the conclusions reached by consensus in the scientific community reflects either political expediency or ignorance. We have an opportunity to rally support for the importance of science and facts in making public policy. If, for example, conservatives fail to acknowledge the contribution of human activity to our changing climate, shame on them. We can't wait for them to wake up. The time to act is NOW!

We don't have the choice of making this March happen or not. They are **GOING** to happen! The only question is what role we will have. For CAPS, that decision is made. We are participating enthusiastically, and I am asking all of YOU to march in a positive, focused, peaceful manner.

*"... a
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**Science Matters.
California State Scientists**



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Photo Highlights from CAPS Lobby Day and Legislative Reception February 7, 2017



Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones (center) with (l-r) CAPS Board members Margarita Gordus, Kelley Aubushon and Brittany Sheahan.



State Treasurer John Chiang with CAPS President Patty Velez (left) and Director Brittany Sheahan.



CAPS Past President David Miller (l) and Director Jason Moore enjoy the reception.

See more photos from
this event on the CAPS
Flickr page:
[www.flickr.com/
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