

The Estuary & Ocean Science Center



Estuary & Ocean Science Center
San Francisco State University
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Unique Place and Purpose

As the *only* marine research institute on the shores of San Francisco Bay, the Estuary & Ocean Science (EOS) Center connects science, society, and the sea through interdisciplinary research, education, and community engagement. In response to climate warming and associated rising sea levels, the EOS Center is a regional leader advancing solutions integral to sustaining healthy and resilient coastal ecosystems and communities for current and future generations. As part of San Francisco State University (SFSU), the EOS Center is uniquely positioned to pursue and fulfill the mission of a public university through students it educates, scientists it trains, and communities it serves.

Vibrant Community

More than 15 faculty and 50 master's degree students undertake individual and collaborative research projects at the EOS Center on SFSU's Romberg Tiburon Campus. Several hundred undergraduate students take courses and acquire skills through hands-on experiential training each year. Scores of undergrads participate in a National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program and the Diving into Ecology and Evolution Program (DEEP) that the EOS Center hosts. The Center's diverse programs and students, moreover, reflect SFSU's status as a minority-serving institution and bolster its position among the nation's top public universities enabling upward social and economic mobility.

The EOS Center enjoys partnerships with the SF Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, organizations co-located on our campus that create synergy with our scientific pursuits and outreach activities. The partnerships include events such as Discovery Day, Rosenberg Institute Public Forum, and other gatherings that welcome the public to our extraordinary 53-acre campus. Impactful programming provides hands-on natural science experience to K-12 public school teachers and trains underserved youth in nature-based climate change adaptation. Partnerships with the Smithsonian's Marine Global Earth Observatory (MarineGEO), the Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System (CeNCOOS), and others extend the reach and relevance of the Center's programs.

SF Bay's Laboratory

A rich 45-year legacy of marine science and discovery endures at the EOS Center, on its campus, and in its backyard – the waters and shores of San Francisco Estuary. Notably, most of the Center's education and research portfolio focuses on San Francisco Bay and the Delta, benefiting the people and decision makers of the State of California.

In this living laboratory, EOS Center researchers and partners conduct experiments along our shoreline, launch boats to survey species and habitats, return samples to evaluate patterns and processes using state of the art equipment, and advance understanding of the Bay's ecology and interactions with people living

along its shores. The Center's flow-through baywater system simulates Bay conditions and supports experiments that reveal critical ecological, chemical, and physical interactions driving ecosystem functions, restoration outcomes, and climate warming effects. The results inform solutions to complex adaptation and resource management problems. Our researchers disseminate findings that support conservation policy, planning, and decision making, frequently interacting with EOS Center alumni now working at stakeholder government agencies and non-governmental organizations at regional, state, and federal levels.

Threat

The importance of the EOS Center's mission as well as its demonstrated value to SFSU, the region, and the state as *the* hub for San Francisco Bay ecology and sustainability research are not in question. Notwithstanding this fact, in 2022 the future of the EOS Center is in question, as university budget challenges are placing the Center's basic functions at risk.

Without identifying base operational funds, SFSU could close the EOS Center and its Romberg Tiburon Campus within two years – representing an immense and irreplaceable loss of bayside property and scientific infrastructure dedicated to solving coastal environmental problems and training bright and diverse young minds.

The EOS Center's continued prosperity and status as the singular marine research institute on the Bay requires the development of a viable funding plan, one placing it on a financial path that insulates it from the vagaries and uncertainties affecting SFSU's budget cycles.

Opportunity

In coordination with university leadership, the EOS Center is working to identify new funding models, collaborations, and partnerships that help support high-impact scientific research, community engagement, and entrepreneurial spirit; preserve the Center's and university's indispensable teaching, learning, and discovery missions; and promote broadly shared diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and environmental justice goals and values.

The EOS Center welcomes ideas and support to satisfy the imperative of securing and stabilizing core operational funding. In parallel, the EOS Center seeks partnership in projects that will catalyze a prosperous future and yield potential partner benefits. Initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Inviting additional partner entities to share the campus, including agencies, other academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations, to strengthen collaborative opportunities.
- Rebuilding the wharf to support water-side access, enhance numerous teaching and research capacities, and facilitate multi-purpose access and usage.
- Creating on-site housing (through renovating and remodeling of existing buildings) for use by students, visiting researchers, and others engaging in related scientific endeavors.
- Determining scientific, educational, and multi-use possibilities afforded by underutilized spaces on the Center's 53-acre campus, and prospects for innovative tech and industry partnerships consistent with our mission.
- Implementing shoreline restoration that will serve as a region-wide demonstration of techniques and tools that help facilitate adaptation to sea level rise and other climate changes, and considering public access and connections both to water and open space above the campus to support university programming as well as serve community needs.

Please be in touch if you'd like to discuss these opportunities.

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