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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Underwater treasures

Editor -- As the fiscal year draws to a close, Congress faces determining the spending levels of various government agencies for the upcoming fiscal year.

California's federal representatives have a significant influence in this process, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation urges members of the House and Senate appropriations committees to recognize the importance of robust funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. As residents of California's central coast know, NOAA is vital to protecting the state's ocean resources, coastal communities and economy.

NOAA has a strong presence along California's central coast, with weather forecasting offices, as well as fisheries management and research laboratories, which is home to several of America's underwater treasures, including the Channel Islands, Monterey Bay, the Gulf of the Farallones and the Cordell Bank national marine sanctuaries.

California's congressional leaders must support the U.S. Senate appropriation level, thereby committing funding to programs that truly benefit California and America as a whole.

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