Public Comment to the California Ocean Protection Council
Draft Strategic Plan Comments: April 12 – June 2, 2006

Date	Name	Affiliation	Subject of Communication
04-19-2006	Al Wanger	Coastal Commission	COPC Strategic Plan
05-04-2006	Jim Curland	Defenders of Wildlife	
05-05-2006	Kirsten Gilardi	SeaDoc Society	
05-08-2006	Brian Foss, et al.	Fishing Heritage Group	
05-09-2006	William Semmes	California Conservation Corp	
05-10-2006	Melinda Dorin	California Energy Commission .	
05-12-2006	William Douros	National Marine Sanctuary Program	
05-12-2006	B.B. Blevins	California Energy Commission	
06-07-2006	Elizabeth Venrick	Scripps Institution of Oceanography/CalCOFI	

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—THE RESOURCES AGENCY ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, *GOVERNOR*

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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April 19, 2006

TO: Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources

FROM: Alfred Wanger, Deputy Director, Energy, Ocean Resources and Water Quality Division

SUBJECT: Comments on *California Ocean Protection Council Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *California Ocean Protection Council Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan* (Strategic Plan). The development of the Strategic Plan is an important step towards improving the protection and management of ocean and coastal resources. We look forward to continuing to work with you and the members of the Ocean Protection Council in further refining the Strategic Plan and improving California's coast and ocean management efforts.

The staff of the California Coastal Commission (the Commission) has reviewed the Strategic Plan and offers the following comments and recommended changes.

General Comments:
The Strategic Plan does not adequately recognize California's flagship coastal management program, the State's federally approved Coastal Non-point Source Pollution Control Program, and several other key programs that address coast and ocean use and conservation. The strong enforcement of existing laws should be the foundation of any comprehensive statewide management strategy. The Strategic Plan should specifically identify these programs and their respective responsibilities, and describe how these regulatory tools will be integrated into the strategic objectives outlined in the document. The Strategic Plan should also recognize that these regulatory programs need continued and sustained support to ensure and improve their effectiveness. The Strategic Plan should also evaluate the effectiveness of existing laws in achieving the stated management objectives and recommend changes to strengthen existing management authorities, where appropriate.

Additionally, the OPC, in coordination with the Coastal Commission and other state resources agencies, should develop a strategic vision for managing California's extensive and important land-sea interface. The quality of waters along the coast is directly related to how we use and manage our coastal lands. Although the Strategic Plan recognizes the

impacts of land-based pollutants on coastal waters, there is little direction or guidance for protecting or restoring water quality through improved land use. Improvements and support for California's stormwater and non-point source pollution control programs, as mentioned in the Strategic Plan, are critical components of any management strategy. However, land use decisions at the local level profoundly affect water quality and the health and function of coastal watersheds and ecosystems. The Strategic Plan does not address this fundamental issue.

The Strategic Plan should be revised to include a comprehensive statewide strategy to improve land use management in coastal watersheds and address the related impacts to ocean and coastal water quality and ecosystems. This strategy should include the use of natural resource based planning at a watershed scale as the foundation for improved land use and local decision-making. Natural resource based planning begins with an assessment of the important natural and cultural resources in each coastal watershed. The assessments are used to identify priority areas within watersheds suitable for development and important resources such as wetlands or groundwater recharge areas that require protection. These assessments form the foundation of local land use plans, which guide and control development and growth in coastal watersheds. Furthermore, this provides an integrated framework for achieving multiple objectives such as habitat and ecosystem restoration and preservation, water resource protection, flood plain management and other watershed related efforts.

The Strategic Plan should also identify the technical and financial resources necessary for supporting the implementation of natural resource based planning at a watershed scale in all coastal watersheds. The OPC should coordinate this initiative effort with existing efforts providing outreach and assistance to local governments regarding these issues.

Specific Comments:

1. The Strategic Plan should include references to the air space above and beyond the coastal zone as part of the ocean and coastal ecosystem. Current studies have demonstrated that air quality and the deposition of pollutants clearly affects the health and integrity of coastal communities and coastal and ocean waters. The Strategic Plan should include coordination with existing efforts to address airborne pollutants to ensure that coastal communities and ocean and coastal ecosystems are protected.

2. The Strategic Plan should clarify the terms ecosystems and ecosystem management (i.e., what is ecosystem management and how do you do it?).

3. All references to "sustainable development" should be modified to refer to "environmental sustainability" or "environmentally sustainable."

4. Section I, Guiding Principles (Page 2) should include securing permanent, adequate funding for ocean and coastal conservation.

5. Section IIA (Page 4): The section on seeking federal support should include a bullet that calls for opposition to any further weakening of federal consistency review authority by the state.

6. Section II, C: The four actions listed in the plan for improving education and outreach are important and needed. In terms of the second item, a web site that provides all ocean and coastal information in one place and serves as a directory to all California's ocean programs, implementation of this action should incorporate an existing resource that is relevant to this effort – the Coastal Commission's on-line Marine, Coastal And Watershed Educational Resources Directory. This statewide directory lists the educational resources and programs, including volunteer and internships opportunities for over 400 marine, coastal and watershed organizations in California. This Directory is on the Public Education page of the Coastal Commission's website (www.coastal.ca.gov or directly reached using www.coastforyou.org) and is continually being updated and expanded.

   In addition, the current actions listed do not address an important need, to foster opportunities for students and the public to gain an appreciation for and understanding of the coast and ocean through direct, first-hand experience. In addition to building a stewardship ethic, research has found that experiential learning in nature provides many benefits, both academic and social. While there are a number of organizations working to address this need, including the Coastal Commission through its Whale Tail Grants and other programs, these efforts are under funded and need to be expanded. The following item should be added to this list of actions:

   - Encourage, fund, and expand experiential learning opportunities focused on California's coast and ocean, especially by enhancing opportunities to get school children out to the coast and ocean.

7. Section IID (Page 6): The funding strategy should call for securing a permanent and adequate source of funding for ocean and coastal protection. This is the single most important thing we can do to leave a powerful legacy of effective conservation.

8. Section IIIA (Page 7): The second sentence states, "these resources are currently exploited." The statement should be amended to include: "and are being depleted as a result of exploitation."

9. Section IIIA (Page 9): Item Number 6 should include a call for the elimination of destructive fishing practices such as bottom trawling.

10. Section IIIA (Page 9): Item Number 8 first line after "important" insert the word "habitat" to make clear what kind of enhancement and restoration projects are being identified.

11. Section IIIA (Page 9): Item Number 9 at the bottom should include the goal of completing restoration of the Bolsa Chica wetlands.

12. Section IIIA (Page 10): Item Number 11 should include water quality monitoring as a tool for evaluating integrity of the in-stream habitat. Monitoring efforts should be integrated into existing statewide water quality monitoring programs.

13. Section IIIB (Page 11): the second sentence should include a reference to storm water runoff.

14. Section IIIB (Page 11): The Strategic Plan should call for increased funding and stronger enforcement of California's federally approved coastal non-point source pollution control program. California has the most comprehensive such program in the nation.

15. Section IIIB (Page 12) Item Number 4: This action item refers to a prohibition on sewage and sewage sludge disposal from ocean going ships and large passenger vessels. Pollution from recreational boating should also be addressed here. With over 1.5 million recreational boats registered in California, small discharges of oil, sewage, and toxic maintenance products add up. The plan should include a bullet addressing pollution from recreational vessels, such as:

    - Support boater education and other efforts to reduce ocean pollution from recreational boats.

16. Section IIIB (Page 12) Item Number 6: We commend the Council for recognizing the marine debris problem and including actions to reduce marine debris in their strategy, and thank you for acknowledging the important role Coastal Cleanup Day and the Adopt-A-Beach program play in reducing the amount of marine debris entering our oceans. We have the following comments on this section:

    - In terms of Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach, these programs originally focused solely on beach cleanups along the coast. In recent years, Coastal Cleanup Day and to a limited extent, the Adopt-A-Beach Program have expanded inland to clean waterways leading to the coast and ocean. This inland expansion is helping to teach inland populations about their connection to the coast and ocean through watersheds, and to collect debris before it ends up on beaches or in the ocean. The importance of expanding these programs to inland waterways should be addressed in the plan. In addition to being promoted and expanded, Coastal Cleanup Day and the Adopt-A-Beach Program need support in the form of additional funding; the first bullet under number 6 should include the word "Fund" or "Support." To summarize these two comments, the wording of bullet one should be changed as follows:

- Fund (or support), promote and expand the Adopt-A-Beach program and annual Coastal Cleanup Day, with a particular emphasis on expanding these programs inland to include coastal watersheds.

17. Section IIIB (Page 12) Item Number 7: The Commission's recent experience working with the Algalita Marine Research Foundation on the Plastic Debris: Rivers to Sea project has underlined the importance of the actions listed in this section. The actions are broadly worded to encompass a variety of initiatives to better understand the marine debris problem, and develop effective solutions. We recommend the following additions:

    Add the following text to the first bullet:

    - (Conduct studies of sources, fates, and impacts of marine debris), *including funding research to develop baseline information regarding the types and quantities of marine debris originating on land in California, and research on the impacts of plastic debris on marine food chains*.

    Add the following bullet:

    - Evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to reduce marine debris.

    Also, please revise the title of the 2006 marine debris action plan referenced in the fourth bullet. The title should read: "A Plan of Action to Reduce Land-Based Discharges of Marine Debris in California."

18. Section IIIC (Page 13): Relative to the section calling for the promotion of healthy beaches, recreational opportunities and coastal access, specific language supporting stronger enforcement of existing laws and policies calling for the protection and expansion of public access (Coastal Act and local coastal programs) should be included. In addition, the section should endorse the Coastal Commission's requirement of compensation for lost recreational opportunities resulting from loss of public beach area due to the placement of shoreline protective structures seaward of private development.

19. Section IIIC (Page 13) Item Number 2, first bullet: The sentence should call for the acquisition, construction **AND** (not "or") installation of signs. The reference should be to the entire California Coastal Trail and SF Bay Trail systems; there should not be a mileage limitation relative to either trail.

20. Section IIID (Page 14) Item Number 2: This statement should be revised as: "Evaluate ways to reduce the marine resource and water quality impacts of existing power plants that use once-through cooling."

Comments on the OPC Draft Five-Year Strategic PlanFrom: Jim Curland [jcurland@defenders.org]
Sent: Thursday, May 04, 2006 12:12 PM
To: Brian Baird; Leah Akins; Penny Harding; rpollock@scc.ca.gov; Alice Chiu; sschuchat@scc.ca.gov; nfishman@scc.ca.gov; mselkirk@earthlink.net; cblackburn@scc.ca.gov; mcazorla@scc.ca.gov
Subject: Comments on the OPC Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan

SENT VIA EMAIL AND FAX

May 4, 2006

Mike Chrisman, Chair and Members
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California Ocean Protection Council Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan

Dear Secretary Chrisman and Ocean Protection Council Members:

On behalf of Defenders of Wildlife (Defenders), a leading non-profit conservation organization representing over 480,000 members and supporters across the nation, over 100,000 or nearly one quarter of our membership of which are in California, we are submitting the following comments on the April 17, 2006 Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan (Draft Plan). We appreciate all of the hard work that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) staff and members have contributed to developing the Draft Plan and the opportunity for us to provide further comments. In addition, we would like to thank you for involving Defenders in the Northern California NGO meeting of February 1, 2006.

In general, Defenders believes that the Draft Plan has improved upon earlier versions, however it still lacks a bold vision with practical, focused steps for achieving it. The Draft Plan has identified six critical priorities with a myriad of goals and action items within each category. While the six priority areas appear to cover the gamut of what is needed in addressing California's ocean issues, these are broad themes, each containing a checklist of goals and actions that, in most cases, don't have clearly defined deliverables. We fully agree with a statement from Rod Fujita, Environmental Defense, submitted in his February 2, 2006 comments: "The vision should be an articulation of a desired state of affairs (example: "productive fisheries supporting vibrant fishing communities and healthy ecosystems") designed to inspire, rather than process statements (e.g., "improve fisheries management")."

Our main, specific comment has to do with the failure of the Draft Plan to use the southern sea otter's role as a sentinel species for marine ecosystem health to expand upon the Draft Plan's goals and actions within the area of Coastal Water Quality. The sea otter is one such species that is a key indicator for ocean health. In recent years a high mortality rate has been documented in the California, or southern, sea otter. Researchers have shown that infectious diseases and parasites consistently account for 40-50% of southern sea otter deaths. The Monterey Bay Area and Morro Bay are two particular hot spots for sea otter disease. Many of these diseases appear to be newly introduced and are related to human activities and pollution that originate on land, including

agricultural and urban runoff, along with industrial and municipal discharge that contribute to rising pollution levels in our coastal waters. The work of researchers at the Marine Wildlife Veterinary Care and Research Center (MWVCRC), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the University of California, Davis to further investigate sea otter health as it relates to water quality should be incorporated into the Draft Plan's goals and actions on Coastal Water Quality.

In addition, we have a number of detailed comments on sections of the Draft Plan:

Page 5, Section on Science and Education: Improving Our Understanding And Awareness, bullet point number 5 under "major actions in the IRO Strategy" – it is mentioned later in the Draft Plan, but in this major action item there should be reference to including the efforts of CalEPA's Education and Environment Initiative to incorporate ocean and coastal science and conservation into the state's various education programs.

Page 5 and 6, first bullet point under, "The Science Advisory Team will" – There should be a clearly defined process outlined in the Draft Plan that establishes an unencumbered way for the Science Advisory Team, the OPC, and interested and involved stakeholders to identify, suggest, and seek testimony and information from the multitude of marine experts in California, as well as outside of the state.

Page 7, first paragraph, third sentence under Ocean And Coastal Ecosystems – "declines in a variety of marine species" should be added to the list of how these ecosystems are threatened.

Page 8, under Protect and restore valuable marine habitats and species – There should be an additional bullet point emphasizing the recovery of marine bird, turtle and mammal populations through addressing the variety of impacts to these populations (such as fishing gear interactions, habitat degradation, etc.).

Page 9, under Coastal Water Quality, Improve coastal water and sediment quality – There should be an additional bullet point emphasizing better efforts to coordinate the research, information sharing, and discussions between groups like the MWVCRC, CDFG, UC Davis, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) on sea otter health and its connection to water quality (for example, in February, Defenders facilitated a meeting between senior scientists at SWRCB and MWVCRC to discuss efforts of both agencies with regard to this issue).

Page 10, under Reduce coastal and marine debris – It is mentioned later in the Draft Plan, but there should be reference and some detail here on the California Derelict Fishing Gear Program.

Page 11, under Promote sustainable approaches to economic uses, bullet point number 2, Balance public access to the shoreline with resource protection, 4th sentence - At the end of the sentence, we would recommend adding "…. and sensitive habitats for threatened and endangered species."

Page 13, under Research and Monitoring, Improve understanding of ocean and coastal ecosystems, last bullet point, first sentence – this should mention the desire to extend this partnership to beyond just SeaGrant programs.

Page 17, Coastal Water Quality, Improve Coastal Water and Sediment Quality, under number 10 – There should be a 10d stating, “Promote a secure funding base to strengthen and make more comprehensive existing programs such as Mussel Watch and the Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program and the development a new program for biological pathogen detection techniques for disease-causing pathogens that contaminate fresh and salt water.” Unfortunately, existing monitoring programs do not test for disease-causing pathogens, and there is scant funding available to pay for these efforts. Until we better understand avenues for disease transmission and the root cause of the previous declines, the prognosis for recovery of southern sea otters is poor, and the related health of the nearshore marine ecosystem will continue to be compromised. In addition, some diseases that kill sea otters are a threat to human health, California’s near shore ecosystems, and the long-term viability of businesses that rely on a clean ocean.

Page 18, Coastal Water Quality, Improve Coastal Water and Sediment Quality – There should be an additional section (number 13, which would make the number under “Reduce Coastal and Marine Debris”, number 14), as discussed in a previous comment about water quality, emphasizing better coordination, information sharing, and discussions between groups such as MWVCRC, CDFG, SWRCB, RWQCB, and UC Davis.

In closing, Defenders hopes that these recommendations will be taken under consideration when finalizing the OPC Strategic Plan. To re-emphasize an earlier point, the final Strategic Plan should clearly define the integration, coordination, and implementation priorities the OPC should accomplish over the next five years, and set an aggressive approach for achieving those results. The OPC must use its broad authority over its member agencies; its technical, scientific and policy expertise; and its political standing to expeditiously put into action a Strategic Plan that will tangibly address California’s existing and growing Ocean issues. Please feel free to contact me by email (jcurland@defenders.org) of by phone (831-726-9010) if you have any questions or would like to further discuss any of the comments.

Sincerely,

Jim Curland
Marine Program Associate
Defenders of Wildlife

From: Kirsten Gilardi [kvgilardi@ucdavis.edu]
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2006 2:20 PM
To: Brian Baird; Leah Akins; Penny Harding; rpollock@scc.ca.gov; Alice Chiu; sschuchat@scc.ca.gov; nfishman@scc.ca.gov; mselkirk@earthlink.net; cblackburn@scc.ca.gov; mcazorla@scc.ca.gov
Subject: OPC Draft Strategic Plan - comment

May 5, 2006

To: Mike Chrisman, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council

From: Kirsten Gilardi
Executive DIrector, SeaDoc Society

Re. Public comment on Draft Ocean Protection Council Five-Year Strategic Plan

Greetings Secretary Chrisman and California Ocean Protection Council members:

Congratulations to the California Ocean Protection Council for drafting a comprehensive, forward-thinking, solutions-oriented Five-Year Strategic Plan. It is exciting to see the principles and recommendations of the Pew and U.S. Ocean Commissions Reports coming to life as guidelines and priorities for action in the COPC's Strategic Plan. I am particularly happy to see references to supporting research that addresses statewide management issues (and to see that the OPC recognizes that "Science should be the foundation of ocean and coastal policy, but often is not." Yes!). In reading Appendix B and collating those action items for which the OPC would provide leadership (vs support) and/or direct funding support in two or more areas (coordination vs science/education vs. funding), it is clear that the OPC has both recognized the gaps in current coastal resource protection and management and proposes to fill those gaps, AND that it is committed to ecosystem-based management and restoration, while also recognizing that the infrastructure and capacity for implementing many of these actions does indeed exist in places. It is a terrific plan, and I very much look forward to seeing it roll out and be successful over the next several years.

I appreciate the opportunity to share brief comments and questions regarding the following specific sections of the draft plan:

1. Section II, Part B, Reduce coastal and marine debris: I would urge the OPC to reconsider its statement "For example, one of the fastest growing threats to pelagic animals is the accumulation of plastic in the water column, including particles that are ingested by filter-feeding organisms." To the best of my knowledge, we currently lack sufficient scientific evidence on the impacts of plastic particle ingestion on the survivability of filter-feeding organisms, and while we have documented adhesion of chemicals on plastic particles, we don't yet know to what extent this is impacting populations. Characterizing it as one of the "fastest growing threats" perhaps overstates it as a stressor, especially when referring to food webs, and especially in comparison to global climate change impacts on planktonic organisms, as well as impacts of marine habitat degradation and extraction, on marine food webs. To be clear: there is no

question that plastic debris negatively impacts marine wildlife, and the potential for microparticles of plastic to disrupt life cycles and food chains in the pelagic ocean makes intuitive sense, is of grave concern, and definitely warrants investigation. However, I would suggest that the OPC consider re-wording this section so as not to allude to evidence that does not yet exist. Furthermore, the OPC may want to consider explicitly stating its support for research that elucidates plastic pollution impacts on pelagic organisms and ecosystems (e.g. food webs). Supporting this type of research would place California at the forefront, both nationally and internationally.

2. Section III, Part C, Plan for Healthy Beaches and Coastal Hazards; Address Climate Change and other Coastal Hazards: I would urge the OPC to revise the first sentence of this section to read "Changes in the global climate will change sea-surface temperatures, sea-surface height...", from "... can possibly change...". There is abundant, compelling, sound scientific evidence for the fact that this is already occurring, and models predict the changes to continue. As this statement reads currently, a level of doubt is inferred which weakens the OPCs commitment.

3. Appendix A, Part A, under Achieve Sustainable Fisheries, item 8(b): OPC may want to consider defining what it means by "sustainable fishing gear": I believe it is referring to fishing gear that minimizes by-catch, but further detail here would be helpful to the reader.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Strategic Plan, and a heartfelt thanks for the time and effort the OPC has clearly put into planning.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Gilardi

Executive Director
SeaDoc Society
UC Davis Wildlife Health Center
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Davis, CA 95616

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May 8, 2006

Mike Chrisman, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth St, Suite 1311
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: COMMENTS ON THE CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

The California Ocean Protection Act calls for measures to support commercial fishing and fishing heritage. These values are also enshrined in numerous other state policies and laws. Therefore, we are pleased to see a section on these issues within the draft strategic plan. We recommend that the revitalization of commercial fishing and fishing heritage become a high strategic priority for the OPC, because the OPC can fill significant gaps (including resource limitations) that have limited progress toward these goals.

Fishing is an integral part of California's heritage and culture. Preservation of commercial fishing and recreational fishing access was one of the people of California's highest priorities in approving the Coastal Act in the 1970's. Our wonderful fishing heritage is an economic and cultural lifeline that allows our colorful past to exist alongside a future of expanded coastal tourism and development. In recent years we have also seen that the production of seafood by California commercial fisheries harvesting fish in a highly regulated manner is far better for the world's ocean than importing it from under-regulated fisheries in other countries or on the high seas.

California's fishermen are regulated under one of the most progressive fisheries laws in the world, the Marine Life Management Act, and comply with a plethora of other management measures, such as trip limits, quotas, size and seasonal restrictions for biological benefits, federal closures such as rockfish conservation area, and the soon to be implemented no-trawl zones to protect Essential Fish Habitat and the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). As a result, some species like ling cod are recovering faster than projected (or the science on which their recovery profiles were based has not proven wholly accurate) and prospects for other fish populations and their habitats are better than anytime in a generation.

Unfortunately California's fishing businesses are collapsing under the weight of precautionary management in the absence of good stock assessments, indiscriminate markets stuck in the framework of large landings at low dollar values, and the increasing cost of doing business on the coast. Currently the average age of a California commercial salmon permit holder is 59 and it is generally true throughout the industry that there is no next generation willing to invest given the uncertainties of the existing regulatory and

market regimes. There is a relatively short window to start to turn this around, before the priceless knowledge and fishing heritage on California's waterfronts are lost.

Stability in the regulatory field is the most pressing need. A move toward smaller, more local or regional management and the designation of secure access privileges to individuals, cooperatives, or co-management entities is needed. Better and more stock assessments and a concerted effort to solve problems like Klamath instream and riparian habitat degradation will also be essential. In the short term, we recommend the integration of harvest sector reforms, port infrastructure improvements and changes in distribution channels and markets with the active intervention of the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) immediately to prevent further use conversions and loss of our traditional working waterfronts. Please consider the following general observations. We will close with some specific recommendations for revising the OPC draft strategic plan.

VISION: Where do we want California commercial and recreational fishing to be in ten years from now?

- Preservation of seafood supply for California and the Nation
- Enhanced California ocean fisheries, sustainably harvested based on science, requiring more investment by the state in stock assessments and data collating. Precautionary management has created strong incentives for research; now is the time to fund and conduct that research.
- Continued improvements in the environmental performance of "best available" gear types and fishing practices, requiring support for innovation and transition costs.
- Value added markets, yielding higher prices to fishermen and encouraging increasing the availability of California harvested seafood to the California consumer. This will require support for marketing associations such as the Salmon Council, assessment of California fisheries for possible environmental certification, and support for communities that are willing to invest in transition infrastructure such as small scale processing and handling facilities.
- Improved water quality will also benefit sustainable fisheries. This will require investment by the state in coastal communities infrastructure to handle stormwater and watershed pollution issues
- Improved flow regimes and instream/riparian/floodplain habitat quality in state, particularly in the Klamath Basin, so that a very weak stock from one river no longer constrains access to abundant salmon runs from other rivers.
- Regional or stewardship area management that looks at the resources of each ecosystem region and takes advantage of community expertise and stewardship to sustain heritage harbors, fishing, and ocean ecosystems. This will require the OPC to support community based or regional management concepts at the state and federal level.

Please consider the following specific comments.

Page 2: Guiding principles of COPA. In reading this, one would not easily understand that maintaining sustainable fishing is a priority. We suggest that another bullet be added.

Recognizing the value of fisheries businesses and recreation by actively seeking better fisheries science and improved fishing methodology, and by supporting and enhancing community fishery management and infrastructure.

Page 4: Pursue regional or local governance approaches. The focus on engagement section does not list any fisheries issues, which hopefully is not the message you want to send. We appreciate this section being included but suggest that language could be added to urge state government to specifically support community co-management or stewardship area management concepts at the federal level. Also, experimental fishery permits (EFP) using improved "no impact" and low bycatch gear and fishing practices are critical transition strategies that can demonstrate ways to increase access to fish immediately (even before depleted species recovery, by avoiding depleted species) and over the long term. State support for EFPs to find ways to reduce bycatch and habitat impact as well as to develop underutilized species and areas is needed.

Page 5: Create a Science Advisory Team for the OPC. If the MLPA SAT is a precedent or model, some have expressed concerns that ecologists dominated the discussion and outcomes. We appreciate the fact that you included social scientists. We urge broader representation on the OPC SAT of fisheries scientists and fisheries social scientists.

Page 8: Achieve Sustainable Fisheries: We support full funding of the MLMA. One has to note that given the precarious state of fishing businesses in California and the state budget situation, full funding and implementation for acts like the MLMA and MLPA will be necessary before pursuing the next "hot" environmental protection initiative if we indeed are going to preserve our traditional working harbors and fishing businesses. Much more can be said here about supporting new markets, EFPs, and environmentally sound coastal fishing infrastructure.

The Fishing Heritage Group, comprised of harbormasters, ocean conservationists, and fishermen, is uniquely positioned to forge consensus on fishing and environmental issues and build support for OPC initiatives. We will be happy to assist the OPC in pursuing its fisheries goals. We appreciate your and the Governor's hard work to create a vision for the future management of California's Coastal areas and thank your for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Brian Foss – Santa Cruz Port District Director
Jay Elder – Harbor Manager, Port San Luis

Rick Algert – Harbormaster, City of Morro Bay
Steve Scheiblauer – Harbormaster, City of Monterey
Linda G. McIntyre - General Manager/Harbormaster, Moss Landing Harbor District
Peter Grenell – General Manager, San Mateo County Harbor District
Jeremiah O'Brien – Morro Bay Commercial Fisherman's Organization
Kathy Fosmark – Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries
Tom Capen – President, Port San Luis Commercial Fishermen Association
Chris Kubiak – Independent fishery consultant, fisherman
Michael Sutton – Vice President, Monterey Bay Aquarium
Rod Fujita – Senior Scientist, Environmental Defense
Chuck Cook – Director, Coastal and Marine Program, The Nature Conservancy

On behalf of the Fishing Heritage Group

FISHING HERITAGE GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Harbors:
Linda McIntyre, Moss Landing; Steve Scheiblauer, Monterey; Rick Algert, Morro Bay; Jay Elder, Port San Luis Harbor; Peter Grenell, Half Moon Bay; Brian Foss, Santa Cruz

Fishermen:
Kathy Fosmark and Mike Ricketts, Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries; Jeremiah O'Brien, Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization

Comment [cp1]: Buyers?

Nongovernmental Organizations:
Chuck Cook, The Nature Conservancy; Rod Fujita, Environmental Defense; Mike Sutton, Center for the Future of Oceans, Monterey Bay Aquarium

Observer/Advisors:
Greg Haas – District Representative for Congresswoman Lois Capps

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS
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May 9, 2006

Mike Chrisman, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mike,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Council's Strategic Plan at your meeting yesterday. I would very much like to seek the inclusion of the CCC in the strategic plan as one of the agencies responsible for implementing some of the action items.

As you know, the CCC has thirty years of experience on projects ranging from salmonid habitat restoration to GIS mapping, backcountry trail building, education, and promotion of California's incredible natural resources. We have a successful history of working with the state, federal, non-profit, and private organizations that will be involved in carrying out the plan.

Enclosed in this letter is the Council's table of action items (Appendix B) with the CCC's comments on the items that are ideally suited to the department's expertise and energetic staff and corpsmembers.

I would also like to put our habitat restoration and trail building experts at your disposal to serve on Council committees and implementation teams. Our staff has the on-the-ground experience needed to develop plans that are both practical and strong.

Should you have any questions, please call me anytime at (916) 341-3177 or email wsemmes@ccc.ca.gov. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William W. Semmes
Director

California Conservation Corps Comments on the
California Ocean Protection Council
Action Items from Appendix B
Of the Draft Five-Year Strategic Plan

Action		CCC Comment
2b	Design and implement a comprehensive MPA monitoring program that can be implemented statewide and that will measure changes in these marine ecosystems and provide information for future management decisions.	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract to monitor the program.
3a	Complete the California Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Management Plan and the state rapid response plan by November 2006 and support their full implementation, including necessary control, eradication, coordination, research, and enforcement. Implement the California Noxious and Invasive Weed Action Plan and support its full implementation along with other invasive species plans for coastal areas.	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to eradicate invasive species. • CCC corpsmembers have worked as interns for Department of Boating and Waterways staff removing and treating invasive species in inland waterways.
4b	Implement ten subtidal restoration projects including eelgrass, kelp, native oyster or other subtidal habitats.	CCC should be identified as a resource in conducting experiments. • CCC has done some of this with eelgrass at Elkhorn Slough Research Reserve. • Corpsmembers have also done experimental preventative treatments of invasives at the direction of the US Fish and Wildlife in Humboldt Bay.

Action		CCC Comment
4c	Complete the San Francisco Bay Subtidal Habitat Goals Project by June 2008 and support full implementation of its recommendations. Initiate similar restoration planning projects in key bays and estuaries at representative locations along the coast, such as Humboldt Bay or Tomales Bay	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to carry out restoration planning projects. • Corpsmembers have done experimental preventative treatments of invasives at the direction of the US Fish and Wildlife in Humboldt Bay.
4d	Integrate the San Francisco Bay Subtidal, Baylands, and Uplands Habitat Goals projects to develop a comprehensive protection and restoration plan for the Bay Area.	CCC should be specifically identified in the plan as the preferred labor force for implementing restoration projects. • Our crews are well trained, have already purchased the equipment needed and are supervised by experienced staff. • Our Americorps Watershed Stewards have assisted with the compilation of input by planning groups and written the draft documents for their professional mentors. • Two of our stewards are placed at the Institute for Fisheries Research on the SF Bay and report directly to Zeke Grader.
5a	Complete planning and begin ecosystem-scale wetlands restoration projects (e.g., South Bay Salt Ponds), including adaptive management and monitoring	CCC should be specifically identified in the plan as the preferred labor force for implementing restoration projects. • See comments from 4d • CCC has done wetlands restoration work in the past.
5b	Support the work of the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and other regional restoration coordination efforts	CCC should be identified as a resource to do the supporting work needed.

Action		CCC Comment
6a	Complete planning for the restoration of rivers and stream corridors to promote the recovery of native salmonid species, and remove high priority barriers to fish passage. Support large-scale dam removal and associated watershed restoration projects that require additional funds to complete, such as Matilija Dam, Rindge Dam, and San Clemente Dam. Examine the removal of dams on the Klamath River to determine future state roles, and consider restoring the Klamath River as a keystone project.	CCC should be specifically identified in the plan as the preferred labor force. • The CCC has four funded Fish Habitat Specialist positions located throughout coastal California. These individuals have the expertise to assist with site assessments, work plan development, GIS monitoring, and grant-writing for projects which involve future work for CCC crews. They specialize in native salmonid species restoration. • The removal of the Matilija Dam will require extensive invasive species removal in the sediment buildup behind the dam and the replanting of native vegetation in the underwater denuded areas.
6b	Develop rapid assessments or inventory procedures for watersheds to facilitate prioritization of watershed projects where a comprehensive assessment is not feasible. Investigate and recommend future policies to protect streams and watersheds.	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to do the rapid assessments needed. • CCC staff in the Coastal Fisheries Program are trained to do these assessments. • The Americorps Watershed Stewards are trained to do rapid assessments. • Please note on the Fish Habitat Specialists in 6a.
7b	Research and pursue regulatory and legislative changes needed to restructure the DFG fee system	CCC should be specifically written into the regulations regarding how the fees should be used.

Action		CCC Comment
9d	Support local governments in addressing land use planning issues affecting marine and coastal water quality, including updating local coastal programs	The plan should list CCC as one of the state departments to be invited to local meetings to let them know how CCC can help them with local projects. The plan should also provide CCC contact information
10c	Investigate solutions to methyl-mercury contamination in the food chain and improve public education on the potential health risks	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to do public education. • CCC performed public education for CIWMB for oil recycling,
11b	Develop consistent statewide standards for sediment testing, including testing for chemicals like PBDE and butyltins	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to take the samples, etc.
13b	Promote and expand the Adopt-a-Beach program and Coastal Cleanup Day	CCC should be identified as a resource to contract with to help with the promotion and expansion of this program.
13c	Support and expand the California Derelict Fishing Gear Program, in cooperation with the fishing community, to reduce impacts from lost commercial and recreational fishing gear	Depending on the target and the implementation plan, CCC could assist with this.
17a	Develop and implement strategies to balance increasing recreational beach access with resource protection. Implement three projects to determine the impacts of various management techniques in representative locations	Depending on the scope of the projects, CCC should be identified as a resource to do the supporting work needed.

Action		CCC Comment
17b	Acquire, and/or construct at least 100 miles of the California Coastal Trail and at least 50 miles of the San Francisco Bay Trail. Open at least 25 new public accessways to the shoreline and construct or retrofit 25 accessways to the shoreline for the mobility impaired	CCC should be specifically identified in the plan as the preferred labor force. • CCC has been specifically identified by the Coastal Conservancy as the labor force to construct those portions of the California Coastal Trail that are under the control of the California State Parks. • CCC crews have extensive experience in building Coastal Trails. • CCC crews have extensive experience in building accessways to the shoreline.
17c	Complete the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail Plan by January 2008 and begin construction of associated infrastructure. Investigate options for water trails in other coastal locations	Depending on the scope of the project(s), CCC should be identified as a resource to do the supporting work needed.
18c	Promote exhibits, festivals, displays, museums, and educational centers interpreting natural, maritime, and military history associated with the California coast and ocean	CCC should be identified as the resource to contract with to help with the promotion program. • CCC has worked on promotion programs under diverse venues for multiple organizations such as the CIWMB.
20b	Support environmental education for children and adults, including docent programs, nature and interpretive centers, bilingual education, live webcasts to schools, and on-the-water ocean experiences	CCC should be identified as the resource to contract with to help with the environmental education programs. • CCC currently supports several conservation/environmental education programs to children statewide. • CCC has experience providing the education on-site as well as in the classroom.

Action		CCC Comment
21a	Support the CalEPA Education and Environment Initiative (EEI) process, and work with other state and federal organizations (such as the COSEE centers and the National Ocean Literacy Initiative), to bring ocean and coastal disciplines in the K-12 model curriculum and continuing education programs and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these acts.	Include CCC to potentially receive the curriculum and qualify for continuing education credits.

From: Christine Blackburn [cblackburn@scc.ca.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2006 12:04 PM
To: 'Melinda Dorin'; leah.akins@resources.ca.gov
Cc: 'Joe O'Hagan'; 'Kelly Birkinshaw'; 'Rebecca Pollock'; 'Marina Cazorla'
Subject: RE: Ocean Protection Council Strategic Plan comment

Hi Melinda,

Thanks so much for your comments. If there is anything else, just let us know.

Chris

From: Melinda Dorin [mailto:Mdorin@energy.state.ca.us]
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2006 11:41 AM
To: leah.akins@resources.ca.gov; cblackburn@scc.ca.gov
Cc: Joe O'Hagan; Kelly Birkinshaw
Subject: Ocean Protection Council Strategic Plan comment

Hi Leah and Chris,

I wasn't sure which person I should send this to. At the meeting on Monday Brian had asked for some language to support research programs outside of monitoring, or Sea Grants. My suggestion is below. Also I had a one word addition in the economics section. I enclosed the sections out of the newest plan and underlined the proposed additions.

Please let me know if you have questions, or need anything else. Melinda

Action: Identify and take advantage of opportunities for encouraging environmentally sustainable economic activity, while seeking to eliminate or reduce the impacts from existing or emerging economic uses. Major economic uses of coastal ecosystems such as tourism, operation of ports and coastal power plants, or new uses such as desalination, liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals, and offshore aquaculture will present new challenges to managing for sustainable development. The OPC will identify specific projects, research, or opportunities that can lead to the development of tools and processes that integrate economic activity with the conservation of coastal ecosystems.

F. RESEARCH AND MONITORING

Solving complex ocean resource problems will require a better scientific understanding of the underlying functioning of marine, coastal, and estuarine ecosystems. The activities of existing research, monitoring, and data collection entities must be supported and integrated. Science should be the foundation of ocean and coastal policy, but often it is not, sometimes because of a lack of support for research and monitoring and sometimes because the results of research and monitoring activities are not effectively communicated to decision makers and the general public.

A goal of the OPC is to improve understanding of ocean and coastal ecosystems in support of effective management.

Objective: Develop an integrated, statewide program of monitoring physical, biological, social, and economic aspects of coastal and ocean ecosystems. Increased and improved data acquisition, analysis, and monitoring provide critical baselines for measuring future changes in ocean and coastal ecosystems, as well as metrics to assess future success or failure of management measures.

?Action: Support and expand ocean observing and monitoring programs. The OPC will support the creation of a state sponsored entity to work with the federal Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) and their designated Regional Associations (RAs). The statewide monitoring program should incorporate IOOS data as well as economic and biological data. The general aims of this monitoring program should be to report on the state of coastal and marine ecosystems and how they are changing, the effects of management measures, and the efficacy of management and other tools.

?Action: Develop a set of statewide standardized indicators for biological, physical, social, and economic disciplines. Standardized indicators are essential to consistent and comparable assessments of the state and trends in ocean and coastal ecosystems and the human communities with which they are linked.

Objective: Acquire and enhance the availability of information regarding the distribution of marine geological features, habitats, and substrates. Information on the distribution of marine habitats and substrates is critical to effective management of fisheries, design of MPAs, and other management efforts.

?Action: Complete a high-resolution statewide sea floor map of habitat and substrate. The OPC will continue to pursue funding and partnerships to complete sea floor maps on all state waters. This mapping will help serve efforts to manage fisheries, other forms of marine life management, and coastal sediments.

Objective: Increase the ability of academic, government, and independent scientists and collaborating private groups to carry out management-oriented research and monitoring and research programs aimed at addressing and reducing impacts to the marine ecosystem.

?Action: Provide financial support for ocean and coastal research. The OPC will continue its support of research that addresses ocean and coastal management issues through its partnership with Californias Sea Grant programs. The combination of federal, state, and other funding sources to carry out these research programs in collaboration with institutions like Sea Grant provide value-added approaches to meeting Californias ocean research needs.

Action: Support (or collaborate with?) the research activities by agencies, universities, and programs that seek to provide a better scientific understanding of impacts to the marine ecosystem and reducing them.

U.S DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
National Marine Sanctuary Program

West Coast Region
99 Pacific Street, Bldg 200, Suite K
Monterey, CA 93940

May 12, 2006

Mike Chrisman
Secretary, California Resources Agency
Chair, California Ocean Protection Council
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Chrisman:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the April 20, 2006 meeting of the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC). The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) looks forward to continuing the very positive relationship it has shared with the State of California on myriad coastal and marine resource management issues. The OPC has been exceptionally effective at applying funding to key projects in a timely manner while seeding new approaches to marine resource management. I commend you for this important, but rare trait in government today.

The NMSP is supportive of the five year draft Strategic Plan for the OPC recently released for public comment. One of its principal goals – avoiding duplication with ongoing management efforts of other regional authorities – is laudable and I support your efforts at making shared management priorities for California's oceans happen more effectively and efficiently.

The following comments reflect my additional thoughts on the overarching message of the draft Strategic Plan and some specific ideas for you to consider prior to drafting the final document.

- The NMSP strongly supports the OPC proposal for a State agency steering committee. Such a committee will increase the efficiency of the decision-making process while providing the OPC with a solid conduit for advice, recommendations, and information.

- We also strongly support your recommendation of engaging the public on a regular basis. As you know, this provides the greatest opportunity for transparency in your decision-making while keeping the public up to date with the latest marine resource management issues and concerns.

- Your proposal to move forward with a regional approach to management is, I believe, vital to the future of California ocean protection. The more we learn about the inter-connectivity of the ecosystems we manage, the more we understand the importance of managing them within a regional context. As you may already know, the NMSP has established four regional offices across the sanctuary system in an attempt to better coordinate management efforts among individual sanctuaries as well between sanctuaries and other regional management entities. Four of the five national marine sanctuaries under the west coast regional office are in California. We stand ready to help the State and to lead, where appropriate, initiatives demonstrating our mutual commitments to ecosystem based management.

- Associated with the above point, I believe it would be valuable to hold an annual State-Federal "summit" to talk about ongoing and new issues in a collaborative, forward-thinking manner. This would provide a forum for us to talk about the things we both care about and identify areas in which we could both improve our existing efforts at protecting California's oceans. Staff in the NMSP's West Coast Regional office would be available to coordinate such a meting.

- Finally, I firmly concur with you that the California Department of Fish and Game needs additional resources for its marine region. This will be critical for the State to implement the proposed management actions you have outlined in the draft Strategic Plan. It will also be critical for your efforts to implement the provisions of the Marine Life Protection Act, especially those related to management planning.

Specific recommendations regarding continued drafting of the Strategic Plan include:

- In continuing our "two-way street" of informal shared management, I encourage OPC staff to review the revised management plans for the four California national marine sanctuaries. Over the past five years, they have been engaged in a comprehensive, public process to review and rewrite management plans. Each draft revised plan contains detailed "action plans" that outline site management strategies for the next five to ten years (e.g., water quality, beach closures, invasive species, public awareness). All of these drafts will be released this summer. Feel free to contact Matt Brookhart in the regional office for more information.

- Second, our Program strongly supports the inclusion of measurable, results-based performance targets in the final plan. Although this can be a daunting task, we feel that the benefits are worth the effort as you will have a powerful means of communicating your progress in meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan with both internal and external audiences.

- Lastly, I recommend that the final Strategic Plan address the OPC's commitment to regional governance. Developing a region-wide assessment of the ecosystems, socioeconomic impacts, and strengths and weaknesses of existing marine protected areas is going to be critical for the future of ocean protection efforts in California. The NMSP is actively involved in this on many levels and I would be happy to discuss our efforts with you in more detail. We will continue to inform the OPC and State departments as these initiatives progress.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak at the OPC meeting last month and to provide you with these written comments. We look forward to continuing to work with you. If you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (831) 647-1920.

Sincerely,

William J. Douros, Regional Superintendent (acting)
West Coast Region
National Marine Sanctuary Program

STATE OF CALIFORNIA — THE RESOURCES AGENCY

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, *Governor*

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION
1516 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512

mc/Board

May 12, 2006

Mike Chrisman, Council Chair
Secretary for Resources
California Ocean Protection Council
1416 9th Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Energy Commission Comments on the California Ocean Protection Council Draft Strategic Plan

Dear Secretary Chrisman:

Thank you for this opportunity for the California Energy Commission to provide our comments on the California Ocean Protection Council Draft Strategic Plan. We suggest that the following items be added to the Strategic Plan's Appendix B – OPC Potential Roles for Implementing Actions:

1. Collaborate with the Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) Program on goal-oriented and topical research on once-through cooling;
2. Collaborate with the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and the Energy Commission to address cumulative impacts in Santa Monica Bay related to once-through cooling;
3. Collaborate with the State Water Board, Regional Water Quality Boards, and the Energy Commission to establish uniform data gathering and impact assessment requirements and regulations pertaining to once-through cooling and the federal Clean Water Act 316(b) regulations;
4. Co-sponsor, with the State Water Board, the establishment and implementation of a statewide Once-through Cooling Working Group to ensure consistency in resource impact assessments and implementation of mitigation measures in National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit renewal process; and
5. Sponsor and help create a state advisory board or working group to address issues related to wetland, intertidal, and subtidal habitat restoration and enhancement projects.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft Strategic Plan, and we look forward to working closely with the Ocean Protection Council in the future.

Sincerely,

B. B. BLEVINS
Executive Director

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO UCSD

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INTEGRATIVE OCEANOGRAPHY DIVISION, 0227
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June 7, 2006

The Honorable Mike Chrisman, Chair
California Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Support for the Ocean Protection Council Strategic Plan

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As the Director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography component of the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations (CalCOFI), I have been interested in the development of the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and the OPC Five-year Strategic Plan. CalCOFI is the oldest ecosystem monitoring program in the United States. A partnership among California Department of Fish and Game, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the University of California (Scripps), it has conducted regular surveys off the west coast since 1949. The current sampling plan, adopted in 1984, consists of quarterly cruises from the San Diego-Mexican border, North to Pt Conception and from approximately ½ mile to approximately 360 nautical miles offshore. Measurements include a broad suite of environmental properties as well as phytoplankton biomass and production, zooplankton biomass and the composition and abundance of fish eggs and larvae.

Our data are available online. In addition, we have an extensive collection of zooplankton and larval fish, dating back to the program's inception.

CalCOFI shares with the OPC the goal of development and support of sound ecosystem management practices. I believe as the OPC Strategic Plan is implemented, you will find that CalCOFI provides the broad ocean climate that is necessary for interpretation of more local programs, and a broad framework for the integration and coordination of individual programs. We will be pleased to help in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Venrick

Elizabeth Venrick
Director, Scripps/CalCOFI