



CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources, Council Chair
Matt Rodriguez, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Gavin Newsom, Lieutenant Governor, State Lands Commission Chair
Fran Pavley, State Senator
Toni Atkins, State Assemblymember
Geraldine Knatz, Public Member
Michael Brown, Public Member

California Ocean Protection Council

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, March 27, 2013
Auditorium, Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Members in Attendance

John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources, Council Chair
Matt Rodriguez, Secretary for Environmental Protection
Kevin Schmidt for Gavin Newsom, California Lieutenant Governor, Chair of the State Lands Commission
Geraldine Knatz, Public Member
Michael Brown, Public Member
Bill Craven for Fran Pavley, State Senator
Cody Naylor for Toni Atkins, State Assemblymember

Secretary Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 2:00pm

1. Welcome and Council Member Announcements

Secretary Rodriguez, Secretary for Environmental Protection, welcomed all attendees to the first Council meeting of the year. Secretary Rodriguez noted that Secretary Laird was delayed at a meeting with the Governor and would join the meeting late. The Secretary acknowledged Michael Brown, the new public member to the Council. He then announced that the State of the Central Coast Marine Protected Area Symposium occurred in February in Monterey and was a highly successful event. Geraldine Knatz announced she was invited to attend X Prize Foundation's competition on Ocean Acidification.

2. Report from the Executive Director

Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director, OPC

Executive Director Kuhlman reported that the State of the Central Coast Symposium in Monterey took place in February and established that it is now time to shift from the designation stage of California's Marine Protected Area (MPA) network process to the implementation stage. The Ocean Protection Council (OPC) will take on a leadership role for MPA implementation. The OPC will be responsible for convening partners in the development of an MPA network framework.

Next, Ms. Kuhlman stated that the Governor's Budget calls for an alignment of the OPC under the Natural Resources Agency, with staff from the OPC moving from Oakland to Sacramento. Additionally,

she announced that the OPC is planning to initiate a structured engagement with tribes in California with the Fish and Game Commission, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the West Coast Governor's Alliance. The goal is to create a coherent and unified outreach strategy, to improve engagement with tribes and to identify opportunities for partnerships. Executive Director Kuhlman also reported on the Fish and Game Commission Marine Resource Committee priorities setting session. The key priorities that the OPC will help with are data and fisheries management, to streamline the fishery management plan process.

Finally, Ms. Kuhlman reported that the OPC has begun to develop a plan for a shared alignment on ocean issues with the State Water Resources Control Board.

3. Report from the Science Advisor

Skyli McAfee, Executive Director, California Ocean Science Trust

Ms. McAfee informed the Council that the draft North Coast Baseline Program Request for Proposals (RFP) was released this morning. This RFP was developed by working with the North Coast community, the North Coast tribes and elected officials. It was drafted to reflect the North Coast's unique community interests and monitoring needs. This draft RFP can be found on oceanspaces.org, and the Monitoring Enterprise website as well as hard copies at different distribution sites throughout the North Coast.

The OPC is presently soliciting for three open positions on the Ocean Protection Council's Science Advisory Team (SAT). Nominations are being sought and self-nominations are accepted. The first position is for a specialist in marine physiology, particularly specializing on marine biological impacts from Ocean Acidification. The second position is for a social scientist or interdisciplinary expert who studies the connections between science and policy. Third, is for a scientist with experience working with tribes. For more information visit the Ocean Science Trust (OST) or the OPCs' web pages.

Informational Items

4. Climate Change, Sea Level Rise, Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia: An overview.

Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director, OPC

Ms. Kuhlman introduced Sarah Flores, Project Manager on Climate Change, to report on the Sea Level Rise Guidance Document and Skyli McAfee and Steve Weisberg, Executive Director of Southern California Coastal Water Project, to report on the Ocean Acidification.

5. Sea Level Rise Guidance: Presentation of the updated Sea Level Rise Guidance.

Sarah Flores, Project Manager, OPC

Ms. Flores, Project Manager, presented the updated Sea Level Rise Guidance. Governor Schwarzenegger's 2008 Executive Order S13-08 directed the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to issue a report on Sea Level Rise for California State Agencies and for Agencies to plan for Sea Level Rise. In 2010, the Coast and Ocean Climate Action Team (CO-CAT) developed the *Interim Sea Level Rise*

Guidance document to serve state agencies while the NAS report was generated. The NAS report was released in 2012 and the Sea Level Rise Guidance Document was updated by incorporating the new science in that report. Ms. Flores summarized the changes in the guidance document, including slightly different Sea Level Rise projections and discussion of the hazards related with coastal storm impacts, particularly in the next thirty to forty years. The Coastal and Ocean Climate Action Team will continue to conduct outreach and find ensure that the Guidance is useful to state agencies.

- Exhibit 1: [State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance Document](#)
- Exhibit 2: [Staff Memorandum March 27, 2013](#)

Secretary Laird joined the meeting with apologies for being delayed.

6. Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia: A brief review of the science and updates on the west coast response and the California panel.

Skyli McAfee, Executive Director, OST and Steve Weisberg, Executive Director, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project

Ms. McAfee reminded the Council that at its September 13th 2012 Meeting, the Council requested she work with the SAT to address ocean acidification and hypoxia. Hence, the OST assembled an Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel comprised of subject matter experts to address the informational needs on both topics. The panel includes experts from Oregon, Washington and federal level agencies and managers.

The OST has engaged in an assessment of managers' information needs, regulatory processes and timeframes around these two issues. The OST will play a leadership role in keeping the Panel focused on managers' needs and target management processes and opportunities that might benefit from the Panel's work. The State Water Resources Control Board along with Regional Water boards have emerged as the primary clients for the needs assessment. The first panel gathering took place on Tuesday, March 27th. One common theme among panelists was to focus on identifying the key local drivers of ocean acidification beyond atmospheric contributions.

Steve Weisberg, an OST SAT member, stated that public interest in ocean acidification and hypoxia is increasing and that OPC prioritization of this issue has helped increase focus on the issue statewide, linking the science to management needs. Dr. Weisberg described two fundamental questions related to ocean acidification and hypoxia:

1. Are local nutrient inputs large enough to overwhelm natural nutrient inputs (e.g. coastal upwelling)?
2. Do these processes happen fast enough for the inputs to have an effect locally?

Dr. Weisberg presented findings from the Southern California Bight Regional Assessment (partially funded by the OPC) but acknowledged missing data needed to populate models. He told the Council that more scientists are focusing on this issue and the continuing research aims to answer these questions.

Comments:

- Mariela Paz Carpio-Obeso, State Water Resources Control Board, expressed support for the Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Panel and needs assessment.

- Bruce Steele, fisherman, commented that current Climate Change and sea level rise data should be interpreted as a best case scenario. He expressed support for a tri-state partnership on Ocean Acidification.

Action Item

7. **Sea-Level Rise:** [Review and possible approval of grant criteria and grant application form for the Local Coastal Program Sea Level Rise Grant Program to help local governments plan for adaptation to sea-level rise and associated climate change impacts along the open coast of California.](#)

Mary Small, Deputy Director, State Coastal Conservancy

Susan Hansch, Deputy Director, California Coastal Commission

Mary Small reminded the Council that at its November 2012 meeting, the OPC approved a grant round to update Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) to address Sea Level Rise and other climate change impacts. The purpose of grant program is to help local governments to update their LCPs to protect important coastal resources. Susan Hansch expressed the California Coastal Commission's support for this item.

Draft grant criteria and application materials were developed by the OPC in partnership with the California Coastal Commission and the State Coastal Conservancy. Eligible applicants are those responsible for coastal planning, local governments, ports and universities. Funding would be awarded in two grant rounds. Seven criteria were developed to review grant applications; 1.) demonstration that plans lead to change, 2.) public benefits and how will project help protect them, 3.) use of best available science, 4.) effectiveness, 5.) urgency and need, 6.) transferability and 7.) matching funds.

Public Comments:

- Leila Monroe, NRDC: Strongly supports this action item, and would like to provide some suggestions to fine tune the seven grant criteria. For criteria 1.) , she suggests adding a timeline requirement. For criteria 2.), she asked for there to be stronger support for the prioritization of natural adaptive mechanisms that will generate more ecological benefits. On criteria 6.), she suggests transferability considerations to include applications at the state level. Lastly, that criteria 7.) include an option for a hardship waiver and that in-kind contributions be considered.
- Sarah Sikich, Heal the Bay: Asked that the roles of the various agencies be clarified in the RFP and suggests that the California Coastal Commission be eligible to receive funds based on their close interactions with local governments on their LCPs. She supports Ms. Monroe's comment that matching funds should include alternative options. She also expressed strong support for the transferability criteria and to include natural adaptive capacity as a priority in the grant scoring. She also expressed concern that local cities should prepare for the combined effects of storm surges along with sea level rise and for that to be included into vulnerability assessments.

- Sarah Almazara, California Coastkeeper Alliance: Supports the Sea Level Rise Request for Proposals and asks to further consider the promotion of natural adaptive capacities.

Ms. Kuhlman suggested that staff report back to the OPC after the first round of proposals to describe the process for sharing lessons learned and the amount of staff time the program required. Secretary Laird requested this along with other comments be established as part of the plan. Mr. Rodriguez moved to include the following changes, add a requirement for a timeline in Criteria 1.; add stronger emphasis on natural protections in Criteria 2. or 3.; add in a requirement that geospatial data go into the portal in Criteria 6.; add language for flexibility on the match requirement to allow for hardship cases in Criteria 7. Kevin Schmidt seconded the movement and it was carried unanimously.

8. ACTION: Election of Council Chair

Secretary Matt Rodriguez nominated Secretary Laird as the next Council Chairperson. It was seconded by Geraldine Knatz and Secretary Laird accepted. Secretary Laird was elected Council Chairperson unanimously.

9. Central Coast Symposium: A recap of the symposium and a discussion of the next steps forward in implementing California's network of Marine Protected Areas.

Skyli McAfee, Executive Director, OST, Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director, OPC

Ms. McAfee stated that the results of the most widespread effort to assess the state of the central coast ocean ecosystem were reported in the Symposium. The data provides a detailed picture of current ocean conditions along the California coast. The general consensus was that some economically important species have demonstrated early changes within marine protected areas and that enforcement is working well. Fishing remains an important industry along the coast and their revenues are increasing. There has been some loss within the industry and some repurposing of vessels but overall the ocean economy is thriving. The science informed network will have broad implications for other ocean issues as well. More information can be found on oceanspaces.org.

Ms. Kuhlman gave a summary of the final day of the Symposium, which established the groundwork and next steps to plan for and govern the MPA network. A series of panel discussions focused on organizing efforts toward protecting MPAs and helped inspire new partnerships. Together, the Ocean Protection Council, the Ocean Science Trust, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Fish and Game Commission has developed an internal work plan for marine protected areas in order to divide up the work in meaningful ways to create an understanding of shared goals and shared core values. The work plan established goals and an external planning process. The Ocean Protection Council will lead the effort to create an overarching framework for MPA network Management.

Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, Director of the Department of Fish and Wildlife: Gave a summary of his panel presentation at the Central Coast Symposium. He stated that the Commission is restructuring the marine region of the organization. They plan to increase their presence in Sacramento and MPAs are being moved to a higher level within their organizational structure. Outreach and education

components will become a higher priority as well. They are committed to a strong partnership for ocean management and particularly for marine protected area management.

Sonke Mastrup, Executive Director of the Fish and Game Commission, expressed his support for stronger partnerships for marine protected area management and recognized the great accomplishments thus far.

- Attachment 1: Symposium Program
- Attachment 2: Symposium Media Coverage
- Attachment 3: State of the California Central Coast: Results from Baseline Monitoring of Marine Protected Areas 2007-2012

10. Public comment on non-agenda items

- Sarah Sikich, Heal the Bay, gave an update on marine debris research and actions. A study came out last year last year by the Convention of Biological Diversity that found that 663 different species are now affected by plastic pollution, a two thirds increase in a decade. Ten percent of the California population now lives in a community with single use ban ordinance. There are currently several bills dealing with plastic pollution and she encourages the Council to support and lend expertise to make these bills as strong as possible. She also expressed her support for the State Water Resource Control Board's Trash Policy, especially in terms of the zero trash limits for TMDL regulations.

11. Arrangements for next meeting and adjournment

The next meeting is set for June 28th in Sacramento.