



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ocean Protection Council

FROM: Amber Mace, Executive Director
Laura Engeman, Project Manager

DATE: September 7, 2010

RE: Ocean Protection Council Program Evaluation Draft Report

ATTACHMENT: [Draft OPC Program Evaluation Report Executive Summary](#)

SUMMARY:

In its first five years, the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) has made significant contributions to improved ocean and coastal management. These efforts were guided by its authorizing legislation, the California Ocean Protection Act (COPA) and OPC's first strategic plan (2006). As the organization prepares to develop its next five-year strategic plan, OPC took the opportunity to undergo a Five-Year Program Evaluation of its performance and impact, anticipating the results of the review will inform future strategies, operations, and approaches to ensure the OPC is undertaking its mission at the highest level of effectiveness.

The Draft OPC Program Evaluation report is now available on the OPC website (<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2010/06/opc-2010-program-evaluation/>). The report provides background on the goals for OPC as established under the COPA, summarizes OPC's accomplishments over its first five years including several case studies of OPC projects, and recommends areas where OPC can refine its focus and improve its effectiveness. The draft will be available for public comment until October 5, 2010.

REPORT FINDINGS:

The following are some of the key OPC accomplishments highlighted in the report as achievements that would not have been realized without the OPC:

- Led California in project to map the entire state seafloor, which now serves as a model seafloor mapping project for the nation. Success of the project can largely be credited to OPC's development of collaborative partnerships with federal agencies, universities, industry, and funders and its leverage of \$14.5 million in federal matching funds. These maps will forever change the way we "see" our oceans by providing accurate statewide images of our seafloor to support numerous ocean management decisions, including: the

designation and monitoring of marine reserves, decisions about sediment management, and approaches to improve shipping safety.

- Achieved widespread attention and elevated the topic of marine debris to a higher level. OPC's actions prompted several bills to be introduced to the Legislature and supported city and county governments in their efforts to pass local ordinance to ban, or reduce plastic bags and Styrofoam.
- Elevated the role of science in governmental decisions and provided a direct communication link between policy makers and the scientific community. OPC funded studies have been credited with "informing the dialogue" in a number of important ocean management areas such as once-through cooling, offshore oil and gas platform decommission, and sea level rise.
- Developed a cohesive statewide forum for evaluating the complex and multi-agency issue of climate change impacts to the state's ocean and coastal resources. The OPC leads the state's Coastal and Ocean Climate Action Team Working Group (CO-CAT) in developing a strategy and implementation plan for adaptation and mitigation of coastal climate change impacts.
- Brought diverse fishing and environmental groups to the table to carry out a portfolio of innovative projects to promote sustainable fisheries practices. The success of these projects has led to additional opportunities for partnerships and attracted more stakeholders to the table.

The following are some of the recommendations for OPC operating principles to improve the effectiveness of OPC going forward:

- Create and support a culture of leadership, follow-through, and accountability
- Improve effectiveness of the Science Advisory Team
- Increase OPC visibility and translate accomplishments and work to the public
- Focus policy efforts in areas with the greatest need, and in which the OPC can provide the greatest benefits
- Develop and follow a comprehensive OPC funding strategy
- Increase involvement and participation of the OPC Steering Committee and Council in OPC activities.

EVALUATION PROCESS:

The NewPoint Group was selected under a Request for Proposals to conduct the evaluation and produce a final evaluation report by November 2010. Over the last few months, the NewPoint Group has conducted a draft independent assessment of OPC's accomplishments to date and interviewed a variety of representatives from OPC's partner state and federal agencies, key stakeholders, and funding recipients.

An OPC Expert Advisory Panel (Panel) was also appointed by the OPC in March 2010 and tasked to bring vision, strategic thinking, and pragmatic knowledge to the evaluation process to ensure that it will help the OPC more fully achieve its mission. These Panel members brought broad knowledge and expertise in policy development and government processes to the evaluation providing guidance in conducting the evaluation and in producing useful and actionable recommendations. The Panel members reviewed draft materials from the NewPoint Group and met three times to provide input and feedback on: (1) the evaluation approach (2) the evaluation report objectives, framework and context, and (3) the draft evaluation findings and recommendations.

The eight Panel members were:

- Richard Frank, Executive Director of the Center for Law, Energy & the Environment at the University of California Berkeley School of Law;
- Steve Blank, Entrepreneur and California Coastal Commissioner;
- Celeste Cantu, General Manager of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority;
- Fred Keeley, Santa Cruz county Treasurer and former member of the California State Assembly;
- Paul Sandifer, Senior Science Advisor to the NOAA Administrator;
- Terry Tamminen, Founder and CEO of Seventh Generation Advisors;
- Andrea Tuttle, Forestry and Climate Policy consultant; and
- Emily Woglom, Director of Government Relations at the Ocean Conservancy.

Comments on the draft OPC Program Evaluation report can be submitted to Laura Engeman at lengeman@scc.ca.gov until October 5, 2010. NewPoint Group will synthesize and incorporate relevant public comment into the final report. A final evaluation report is expected to be presented to the Council at its November 2010 meeting.