



Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 13, 2012

10:00 am

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

Alan Gordon for John Chiang, State Controller, Chair of the State Lands Commission

Bill Craven for Fran Pavley, State Senator

Bridget Kolakosky for Toni Atkins, State Assemblymember

Geraldine Knatz, Public Member arrived at 10:50

Secretary Laird called the meeting to order at 10:05am

1. Welcome and Council Member Announcements

Secretary Laird called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and introduced Catherine Kuhlman, the newly- appointed deputy secretary for ocean and coastal matters and executive director of the Ocean Protection Council. He highlighted that Ms. Kuhlman had worked for many years at region 9 of the Environmental Protection Agency and as the Executive Officer of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Secretary announced that he had consolidated two separate positions related to ocean matters into the single position held by Ms. Kuhlman as part of an effort to better organize the state's work on ocean matters.

Secretary Laird announced the designation of the North Coast Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) this past June and highlighted the participation in the process by tribal groups. Secretary Laird announced that the five year review for the Central Coast MPAs is scheduled to be completed and presented in February. Last, Secretary Laird noted that the Ocean Protection Act (2004) had been shortlisted for its 2012 Future Policy award by the World Future Council.

2. Report from the Executive Director

Executive Director Kuhlman thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve them and thanked the OPC Secretary and staff for their help with her transition into the new position. Ms. Kuhlman

presented to the council a [report on the budget](#) of the OPCs. Kuhlman reported the status of the Proposition 84 funds allocated to the OPC as well as on the OPC's operating budget. Secretary Laird commended the Director for the budget presentation and requested an annual budget report.

3. Report from the Science Advisor

Skyli McAfee, OPC Science Advisor and Executive Director of the Ocean Science Trust, noted that she and her staff were working with the Department of Fish and Game on scientific take permits for MPAs and the potential impact of climate change on MPAs. Ms. McAfee also reported that the Monitoring Enterprise has been fully engaged on the North Coast meeting with local communities to learn what unique attributes are needed for implementation and monitoring of the new MPAs.

Action Items

4. Ocean Acidification:

Ms. Kuhlman introduced this item requesting Council approval to have the OPC Science Advisor assess the current scientific understanding of ocean acidification, work with state resource managers to identify key management questions and report findings to the Council at a future meeting. Ms. McAfee provided the Council with a brief background on the issue of ocean acidification noting that globally there has been a decrease in the pH level of oceans in the oceans and that this acidification is caused by absorption of atmospheric CO². Ms. McAfee also explained that there is natural variability in the pH of ocean water off the California coast and processes such as upwelling also affect ocean acidity making it difficult to tease apart the relative causes and impacts of ocean acidification. Finally, she noted that this is a relatively new field of research but that there was a very promising emerging collaboration of researchers along the entire west coast working together to improve understanding of the issue.

Public Comment:

- Steve Weisberg, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority – Stated support for the recommendation and requested that the action be expanded to also look at the related issue of low dissolved oxygen.
- Kaitlin Gaffney, Ocean Conservancy – Stated support for the recommendation and suggested an increase in regional partnerships on ocean acidification.
- Sean Bothwell, California Coastkeeper Alliance - Stated support for the recommendation and suggested the council work with local water boards to deal with monitoring and data collection. Mr. Bothwell also promoted the creation an ocean acidification panel similar to Oregon.

The Executive Director noted that the resolution would be revised to include low oxygen. The item was moved for approval by Mr. Gordon seconded by Secretary Rodriguez and carried unanimously.

5. Memorandum of Understanding among the West Coast Governor's Alliance on Ocean Health and the West Coast Ocean Observing Systems:

Valerie Termini, OPC Project Manager presented a resolution authorizing the Chair to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health and the West Coast Ocean Observing Systems to improve collaboration and data sharing. She noted that there were a number of priorities including ensuring better interoperability between systems and data sharing on regionally relevant observing data. Ms. McAfee serves on the Central Coast Ocean Observation Systems Governing Council and she spoke in favor of the action, noting that this was not merely an administrative action but will help save money and reduce redundancy.

Public Comment:

- Leila Monroe, NRDC – Supported the resolution and the specific actions promoting a working relationship between the state and the broader WCGA community.

Secretary Rodriguez requested that the OPC seek approval from the Governor's office to sign the MOU but supported the resolution pending that approval. Secretary Rodriguez moved for approval, it was seconded by Mr. Gordon and carried unanimously.

Informational Items

6. Sea-Level Rise:

Amy Vierra, Natural Resources Agency Policy Analyst, reported to the Council on the recently released National Academy of Sciences' [Sea-level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present and Future](#). This report was the result of a 2008 Executive Order calling for a report on sea level rise specific to California. The report was expanded to include Oregon and Washington and was released on June 20th of this year.

Dr. Cayan of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and USGS served on the National Academy of Science committee that authored the sea level rise report and he presented an overview of the report to the Council. Dr. Cayan stated that sea level rise has already risen along the coast of California but that the rate of sea level change is expected to increase two to eight fold in the next century.

Dr. Cayan emphasized that the impact from rising sea level will largely be felt through the concurrence of increasing storm surge and high waves along the coast. This along with reduced accommodation space for wetlands would result in an overall loss in wetlands due to low elevation flooding and no adjacent land available to become wetland due to development.

Ms. Vierra stated that the OPC's Interim Sea Level Rise Guidance document would be updated to incorporate the findings of this report. She also emphasized that the state's guidance document recommends a risk tolerance approach acknowledging that while there is broad consensus that sea level is rising there is uncertainty about the exact magnitude of the rise we will experience in California over the next century.

Public Comment:

- Richard Sadowski, Morro Bay Resident – Presented concerns about sea level rise with respect to sewer systems and below ground infrastructure.

7. Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA)

The Fish and Game Commission Executive Director, Sonke Mastrup, reported on the accomplishments of completing designation of a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) along the open coast of California.

OPC Project Manager Clare O'Reilly gave an overview of the OPC's role supporting the implementation of the MPA. The OPC has provided significant funding to pay for mapping work and staffing that supported the designation of the MPAs. The OPC has also funded the development of the MPA monitoring program and the baseline monitoring for each region. The OPC's contribution has been significantly leveraged with \$75 million of private funding. Through these efforts the OPC has supported science based implantation of the MLPA.

Ken Wiseman, Executive Director of the Marine Life Protection Initiative, summarized his experience with the MLPA process. He highlighted the partnerships with foundations and their \$75 million dollar support for the process. Mr. Wiseman emphasized that the next steps include the continued monitoring of MPAs and implementing effective governance of the MPAs. Lastly, he noted that both the biggest challenge and greatest victory was the creation of a working partnership with tribal groups especially on the North Coast.

Public Comment:

- Janine Pfeifer, Mendocino County – Expressed appreciation for the outcomes of the North Coast designation process and asked that the local community be included in the next phase of the process.
- Dan Hamberg, Mendocino County Supervisor – Presented a letter to the Council from the Mendocino Board of Supervisors requesting that the OPC work with local interests to continue the open dialog. Mr. Hamberg hoped that what has been achieved through the MLPA initiative process on the North Coast could be maintained.
- Leila Monroe, NRDC – Thanked the Council and MLPA Initiative staff, MPA Monitoring Enterprise staff, and the stakeholders that have been part of the process for the last number of years for completing a great accomplishment. She said everyone involved should be congratulated on what is recognized nationally and internationally as a gold medal effort with the application science , partnerships public private partnership and interagency coordination working to support protecting these areas.
- Kaitlin Gaffney, Ocean Conservancy – Thanked the Ocean Protection Council for their support through the years to make the Ocean Protection Act such a success. She highlighted a change in awareness and attitude towards the MLPA along the south coast and expressed gratitude for the completion of the designation of the coastal MPAs. Ms.

Gaffney presented the Council with a copy of a recent Sunset Magazine article on the state's MPAs.

- Marla Joe Bruton, Morro Bay Resident – Stated her support for the MLPA process and the MPAs and noted that the local fishing community was now more supportive of the MPAs. She stated her opposition to the seismic testing proposed by PG and E for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant near Morro Bay.

Secretary Laird noted that there will be a response to the letter from Mendocino Board of Supervisors. He expressed hope that the trust built up during the MLPA process would continue in the next phase of implementation.

8. Japanese Tsunami Marine Debris Response:

Sarah Flores, OPC Project Manager, provided an update on the Japan Tsunami Marine Debris efforts and introduced California Emergency Management Agency Assistant Secretary, Stephen Sellers. Mr. Sellers reported that CalEMA's primary focus had been the emergency of the tsunami itself but that it was now looking to prepare for response to the marine debris. Mr. Sellers informed the Council that a Concept of Operations was close to being released by the Secretary for CalEMA and that this document would include a functional description of roles and responsibilities of agencies in responding to tsunami marine debris.

Mr. Sellers highlighted that the first response to tsunami marine debris will fall to the authority responsible for the specific beach affected by debris. Mr. Sellers emphasized that their guidelines on debris protocols and hazardous materials would be used and that there is no difference from standard hazardous materials guidelines. Lastly, Mr. Sellers stated that CalEMA had received a \$50,000 grant from NOAA for dealing with the Japan Tsunami Marine Debris. CalEMA is passing these funds to the California Coastal Commission to support volunteer beach clean-up efforts.

Eben Schwartz, the California Coastal Commission's Marine Debris Program Manager, provided an update of his organizations efforts for dealing with the potential tsunami debris. Mr. Schwartz reminded everyone that California Coastal Clean-up Day was the following Saturday and thanked CalEMA for partnering with the Coastal Commission to help fund volunteer clean-up efforts.. Mr. Schwartz emphasized that the cleanup efforts and volunteer network will be used to help to gather data about the impact of tsunami debris on California. Existing cleanup efforts will be used to establish a baseline for debris collection at a number of sites along the California coast to help determine when and if debris from the Japan Tsunami arrive in California.

Kaitlin Gaffney, the Director of the Pacific Program for the Ocean Conservancy presented to the Council with an overview of national and international efforts to deal with tsunami marine debris. She highlighted the concerns of Alaska, which has already seen an impact from the tsunami marine debris and the importance of a timely response to dealing with it. Ms. Gaffney described efforts to coordinate information and response to tsunami marine debris among the states of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, and Hawaii and with Japanese officials.

Public Comment:

Tony Marina, Assembly member Jerry Hill – Presented a letter to the Council requesting the creation of a centralized California website with information and that such a website would be a useful tool for local officials.

Ms. Flores informed the council that the state's Marine Debris Steering Committee had been reconvened allowing state agencies talk together and address the Japan Tsunami Marine Debris issue and the issue of marine debris itself.

9. Council Member Requests for Future Agenda Items

Ms. Kuhlman informed the council that she has added this item to the agenda as a forum to allow Council members to speak on agenda items for the future.

10. Public comment on non-agenda items

- Joe Geever, Surfrider Foundation – Requested that the OPC assist with implementation if integrated water management. He thanked Ms. Kuhlman for attending DWR water plan meeting and requested that OPC continue to support integrated water management in the state.
- Leila Monroe, NRDC – Submitted a letter by NRDC and 6 other marine NGO's regarding growing concerns on siting and planning for desalination plants. She asked that existing tools developed by the OPC for once through cooling be put to use for desalination. Lastly she requested the OPC work on desalination coordination and meet the integrated water management objectives in the OPC's strategic plan.
- Sean Bothwell, California Coastkeeper Alliance – Asked the OPC to support trash policy efforts similar to the efforts in Los Angeles.
- Richard Sadowski, Citizens Opposed to Acoustic Seismic Testing – Expressed concern about the permitting process for the seismic testing work being commissioned by PG and E. He asked the council to intervene to stop the testing.
- Marla Jo Bruton, Citizens Opposed to Acoustic Seismic Testing – Expressed concern about the effects of seismic testing and is opposed to seismic testing.

11. Arrangements for Next Meeting and Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 1:09 pm.

The next meeting will be held on November 29th 2012 in Sacramento.