



MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Ocean Protection Council  
**FROM:** Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director OPC; and Skyli McAfee, Executive Director OST and Science Advisor OPC  
**DATE:** June 10, 2014  
**RE:** Appointment to the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT)

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

The Executive Directors of OPC and OST recommend the Council approve the following resolution:

“The Ocean Protection Council approves and appoints **Mr. Barry McCovey, Yurok Tribal Fisheries Program, Yurok Tribe** to the OPC Science Advisory Team for a regular three year term starting from the date of this resolution.”

**BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to AB 1056 (Leno) the OPC established a Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) consisting of up to 25 respected scientists from across a range of ocean and coastal disciplines and research institutions. The mission of the OPC-SAT is to support the OPC in ensuring that the best available science informs OPC policy and funding decisions.

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) coordinates all activities of the OPC-SAT. OST is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation dedicated to helping scientists and decision-makers work together more effectively. OST’s executive director also serves as the OPC science advisor and co-chair of the OPC-SAT. Over the course of 2013, OST coordinated a public nomination process to identify two scientists to recommend for two vacancies: a marine biologist, and a social scientist.

The OPC-SAT have submitted the following candidates for formal confirmation by the OPC:

- Mr. Barry McCovey, Jr. (Fisheries Biologist, Yurok Tribal Fisheries Program, Yurok Tribe)

**Role of the OPC-SAT**

OPC-SAT members serve as liaisons to the wider scientific community for the OPC and its staff. Members must be willing to respond to the state’s needs, and provide requested information or reviews, sometimes on short notice. This means not only having the appropriate authority and availability to provide scientific and technical information within their specialty and discipline, but a proven track record of working collaboratively and constructively with people from a range of backgrounds, disciplines, and perspectives.

OPC-SAT members support the state with scientific guidance related to, but not limited to, the following areas of marine and coastal management:

- Keeping the state apprised of emerging science issues and scientific innovations;
- Assisting in describing, refining, and ranking research priorities;
- Synthesizing and translating complex scientific knowledge around issues identified by the Ocean Protection Council or its staff;

- Responding to information requests;
- Evaluating the technical merit of scientific and technical projects proposed to OPC;
- Suggesting outside experts to serve as peer reviewers for OPC proposals and projects, as well as products of other state and federal entities partnering with the OPC;
- Providing technical expertise and advice on and review of OPC project reports and literature reviews; and
- Convening and running working groups at the direction of the science advisor (OST executive director) to support scientific and technical components of management issues.

### **OPC-SAT Vacancy – 2013/2014**

In 2013, a vacancy became available on the OPC-SAT. To initiate this process, OST engaged with OPC management to identify the expertise that would serve the OPC in coming years, and determined that OPC would best be served by an expert who, among other things, has an understanding of tribal perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge in marine resource management.

When seats on the OPC-SAT become available, OST conducts a public nomination process. Upon formulation of vacancy descriptions, OST released a public notice of vacancy, including instructions for making nominations. These materials were posted on OST's and OPC's websites, distributed over the OPC listserv, and spread through other public platforms. The nomination period lasted one month, and all nominations were submitted to the OST Executive Director/OPC Science Advisor. The response to this vacancy garnered two highly qualified nominees from the Yurok Tribe. Following the nomination period, OST contacted each nominee to confirm their interest in serving, and to gain additional, standardized background for the selection process. OST compiled all materials and engaged with the OPC to select a highly qualified candidate:

- **Mr. Barry McCovey, Yurok Tribal Fisheries Program, Yurok Tribe<sup>1</sup>:** Mr. McCovey has been a Fisheries Biologist for the Yurok Fisheries Department for over 10 years, conducting scientific studies and analyses to support fisheries restoration in the Klamath Basin. He combines background and training in western sciences with knowledge of Tribal cultural practices and Traditional Ecological Knowledge with regard to the use of marine resources. Mr. McCovey has participated in marine resource gathering using traditional methods all his life, and has intimate and first-hand experience in the utilization of Traditional Ecological Knowledge, having learned it from family members and Tribal elders. Mr. McCovey received a B.S. in fisheries biology from Humboldt State University in 2007. In 2011, was the co-author of the paper "*Electronic Tagging of Green Sturgeon Reveals Population Structure and Movement among Estuaries*," which received the American Fisheries Society 2011 Publications Award as the best publication for 2011 in Transactions of the American Fisheries Society.

For information and biographies of the entire OPC-SAT membership, please see:

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/science-advisory-team/>

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<sup>1</sup> Description excerpted from nomination materials.