

MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CA Fish and Game Commission

Committee Chairs: Commissioner Rogers and Commissioner Sutton

Meeting Summary

May 25, 2010

Best Western Beach Resort Monterey
2600 Sand Dunes Drive
Monterey, CA 93940
Pt. Pinos Room

1. Informational updates

a. California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)

DFG Deputy Director Sonke Mastrup provided an overview of possible major reductions to the department's budget that could significantly impact the Marine Region. DFG is working on prioritizing tasks in anticipation of the pending loss of resources.

Marine Region Manager Marija Vojkovich reported that the department is continuing to work on ways to move forward with the herring and lobster FMPs. DFG is exploring an external funding source for herring and the funding for the lobster FMP was not granted. DFG is moving forward with the lobster stock assessment internally and will continue to work with stakeholders to explore funding sources for a full FMP.

Ms. Vojkovich submitted a summary of Marine Region activities to the MRC highlighting the breadth of activities that the Marine Region is responsible for. Given the budget cuts, the Marine Region is narrowing the list of topics they are engaged in. An internal review helped focus attention on priority items, especially activities that DFG is uniquely situated to complete, such as continued data collection for commercial and recreational fisheries.

b. Ocean Protection Council (OPC) Update

OPC Secretary Sam Schuchat and Executive Director Amber Mace reported on recent and planned activities of the OPC. These include:

- Registration is open for the California and the World Ocean Conference in San Francisco, September 8 – 10. OPC meeting will take place on Sept 7.
 - Click [here](#) to register for the conference
- OPC is undergoing an evaluation by consulting team and is requesting public input
 - Click [here](#) to learn more about the OPC evaluation

- The bond freeze has been lifted and OPC can begin funding projects again. Current projects include:
 - LIDAR survey of entire California coast to 10m elevation in conjunction with US Army Corps of Engineers study. Study is intended to provide high resolution digital elevation model of coast.
 - Collaborative fisheries research project. Interviews for director are underway and anticipate selecting candidate by midsummer.
 - Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF)
 - Reached agreement on a number of items – bill in Legislature that represents consensus from DCTF
 - Capacity limits and staggered starting dates
 - Extends sunset date to allow DCTF to continue to meet.
- The next OPC meeting will be held on June 24 and 25 in Santa Barbara
 - Second day of meeting (June 25), Council will receive final MLMA Lessons Learned report and recommendations
 - The OPC will also have a panel discussion about the recently released Oil Platform Decommissioning study. Click [here](#) to learn more about the study
- CA Sustainable Seafood Initiative – pursuant AB 1217
 - Assembled advisory team of over 20 individuals, fishers, scientists, NGOs, restaurateurs, retailers
 - First meeting in Oakland on May 13, 2010 was very successful
 - Across the board enthusiasm, lots of good ideas
 - Intention to bring plan in November to OPC
 - Commissioner Sutton expressed concerns about problems of deviating from Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) program and developing new label.
 - Important to bring to MSC standards first and then apply a California label

2. Final Report MLMA Lessons Learned Project

Mike Harty and John Kirilin of the Marine Life Management Act Lessons Learned Consulting team [highlighted the background of the project and summarized key results](#). This culminated a 1.5 year process that incorporated the valuable feedback of many stakeholders and scientists, including an OPC peer review. The consulting team viewed the project not as a task to solve the current challenges implementing the MLMA, but to create a tool that will provide a platform for useful policy discussion for DFG, the Commission, and OPC. Key discussion points included:

- Need to deal with fundamental governance issues
- Value of a transparent plan with key deliverables and dates
- Limited capacity of DFG and FGC

- Management plan must focus on items already on the plate, not adding new tasks
- Importance of community assets
- Value of OPC to support in ways other than just funding
- Data needs for ecosystem based management, disjoint between science and policy
- High cost of FMPs

The MRC will continue discussions with DFG and OPC to develop recommendations for next steps.

More information on the MLMA Lessons Learned Project and the final report can be found on the project [webpage](#).

3. Report on North Central Coast MPA Baseline Monitoring Program

Drs. Cheri Recchia and Liz Whiteman of the MPA Monitoring Enterprise provided an update of the recently funded projects for the North Central Coast MPA Baseline Monitoring Program. The purpose of the baseline program is to describe and assess North Central Coast ecosystems at the time of MPA implementation to provide a baseline from which to compare responses in the future. After a formal solicitation and review process, eleven projects were selected for funding. These projects encompass a broad range of ecosystems (e.g., kelp, deep rock, rocky intertidal) as well as human uses and socioeconomics collected by academic, agency and citizen-science programs. Most projects are focused on two years of data collection followed by analysis and reporting.

4. Presentations on data poor fisheries management / alternative assessment methods

A series of presentations were provided by [Burr Heneman](#) (Director, Commonwealth Ocean Policy Program), [Dr. Alec MacCall](#) (Senior Scientist, NOAA Fisheries Service – Fisheries Ecology Division), and [Tom Barnes](#) (Program Manager, State Managed Marine Species, California Department of Fish and Game). The presentations and ensuing discussions were focused on current activities and new methods to manage data poor species. Key concepts included:

- Effective management in the face of uncertainty
- Descriptions of data poor assessment and management methods
- Outcomes from previous DFG workshop on managing data poor fisheries
- Current data poor tools being applied to state fisheries to assess vulnerability and move to data rich status
- Tools and techniques to integrate MPAs and fisheries management

5. Consideration of MRC support of proposed legislation

After discussion, the MRC chose to recommend the following proposed bills for support by the Commission:

- AB 2125 (Ruskin) Marine Spatial Planning
- AB 2376 (Huffman) Fish and Wildlife: Strategic vision

These proposed bills will be presented to the full Commission for possible support at the Commission's June meeting. The MRC will continue to track proposed bills for future consideration of possible support.

6. Meeting Adjourned at 4:30 pm