

Meeting Summary
State Ocean Caucus Outreach Meeting
Ilwaco, WA
July 11, 2007 1:00-3:00 pm

Summary of Meeting

1. Kathleen Drew from Governor Gregoire's policy office welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. Jennifer Hennessey with Department of Ecology gave an update on Ocean Policy Work Group final report, progress on recommendations, and establishment of the State Ocean Caucus and Ocean Policy Advisory Group to act on the recommendations of the Ocean Policy Work Group.
3. Raechel Waters of Washington Sea Grant summarized the Sea Grant regional research priorities planning effort. The idea is to build off of other reports and outreach conducted as part of the Ocean Policy Work Group and Puget Sound Partnership. Developing the research plan will involve stakeholder meetings in fall of 2007. The first one will be a bi-state meeting held in Astoria, Oregon.
4. Tim Smith from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife presented a background on county-based Marine Resource Committees and recent legislation allowing the formation of them on the outer coast.
5. Kathleen Drew presented an overview of the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health and opportunity for public comment on what actions the three states should take regionally.

Copies of these presentations will be posted on the website.

West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health

Question

- Will the action plan create a regional ocean governance structure? What will be the process for implementing the action plan (staffing, etc.)? Answer from Washington representative: No, new bureaucratic structure is suggested at this point.

Comments

- Excited about the opportunity presented by the West Coast Governors' Agreement and other state efforts.

Comments on West Coast Governors' Agreement – continued

Salmon and Fisheries

- Need better response from Federal government and officials on resolving conflicts between the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Migratory Bird Act, and Endangered Species Act. Seals, terns and cormorants need to be managed to increase fish returns. Congressmen won't introduce anything to resolve the conflict, because they are afraid of response by environmentalists.
- Response from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): The acts outline a specific sequence to follow for resolving conflicts. WDFW, Governor, and Congressmen are responding with the process laid out before them for responding. However, a good question is whether the process works.
- Pacific Fisheries Management Council to recognize differences in stocks and abundance including sub-species is a big issue for Pacific Marine Fisheries Conservation group. Maybe West Coast Governors will take baby steps on this, but it would be good for the West Coast states to take a stance on this.
- Salmon built the coast, need access to the resource. Right now, we are allowing the resource to be wasted from predation from birds. Representative Hastings developed a bill to reform the Endangered Species Act. Communities out of business with fishery decline.
- Spending hundreds of millions on food for birds (Reference to work by Bonneville Power Administration and others to increase number of juvenile salmon in river, which are then eaten by cormorants and terns before the fish make it to the ocean). Meanwhile in places like Minnesota, they allow control of cormorants because of their impact on forage fish and sport fishing.

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)

- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) proposal for Bradwood facility
- LNG – Willapa Audubon submitted comments on the West Coast website. Thank you for accepting them. Opposed to LNG project. Others also opposed included Portland Audubon and Washington Audubon.
 - Focused their statement on CZMA authority.
 - This is a project that affects the estuary – glad attention is being paid to the estuary.
- 7th priority of the West Coast Agreement is sustainable communities. LNG and fossil fuels is contrary to creating truly sustainable options for coastal communities and sustaining traditional uses.

Dredging

- Local side ports can't compete with larger ports for dredging needs, but are vital to local economy. Suggest changing the tonnage equation used by the Corps. Allow people on ships to count as tonnage, because small ports carry lots of passengers through sport fishing and this equates to money for the port and community. In a few years, sediment will silt up ports from Kalama down to the mouth of the river. This problem extends to other small ports down the coast.

Comments on West Coast Governors' Agreement – continued

Dredging

- The problem is upriver. Lost economic opportunity through timing windows and toxic sediment disposal. Upriver people should pay the price – cost of disposal of toxic sediment is the problem.
- DDT in sediments. Port is incurring expense because of other people's pollution. The federal government should help offset the cost. We need to get together with others on the other side of the river to solve this problem.
- Comment from representative from US Army Corps of Engineers: The Columbia River named a Legacy River, which could produce some money to deal with toxic sediments.
- Dredging channel development equals economic sustainability.

Alternative/Renewable Ocean Energy

- Dale Beasley, Columbia River Crab Fishermens Association has intervened in FERC process for AquaEnergy/Finavera wave buoy project. Already lost lots of fishing areas with no fishing zones. Right now, project proposed will lose money – how will Finavera recover money lost from pilot project? By expanding their operation in the future. WDFW suggested mitigation for loss of fishing area, the cumulative loss of fishing area by all of these types of projects should be included in the analysis. Fishing areas are lost one "Finding of No Significant Impact" at a time.
- Alternative Ocean Energy needs to ensure no net loss to fishing and other marine issues with any alternative energy projects.

Ocean Monitoring and Research

- Commend Washington for work to get Marine Resource Committees going on the outer coast. This is a model for getting work done locally and would be good model to share with Oregon and California.
- Who's the lead contact for following up on Doppler RADAR and weather? Senator Cantwell and Norm Dicks support it. Dicks' office wants to pull together the National Weather Service and UW on cost figures to take it to Congress. Stagnated for a couple years, but State Ocean Caucus support will help Congress/Senate advocate support for it.
- Dale Beasley, Columbia River Crab Fishermens Association – June met with National Weather Service regarding Doppler and they weren't very receptive to the idea. Small mariners need more buoys with current, wave height and wind speed information. During the last two winters, all the buoys have been down. Suggested redesigning buoys so you can set a man on them to fix them during the winter. The Coast Guard tender that service buoys takes a while to fix them (they can only come out in calm weather, meaning buoys are not operational much of the time). Buoys should be within 5 miles of coast to provide most relevant information for mariners, since waves change as they come closer to shore.

General feedback on meeting and Washington's Ocean Action Plan

Late fall and winter is a better time for these meetings than summer. Fishermen are out trying to make a living during the summer.

Concern about the process used. We lose time and product – don't impact us in a negative way, sees this process as bad. Micro-managing everything means restrictions on everything.

Healthy coastal community needs access to the resources (fish and other marine resources). Individual Fishing Quotas will not support this – turns a public resource into an individual right. Expressed concern about statement regarding Individual Fishing Quotas in the Washington Ocean Action Plan. *Response and clarification:* This was part of the background on recommendations from the US Commission on Ocean Policy to states. Individual Fishing Quotas were NOT a recommendation for Washington's Ocean Action Plan. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife does support some Individual Quotas for certain fisheries, but shares concerns about how they are set up.

Younger generation needs access to high value fishery to get established in fishing business. This provides a way for communities to sustain themselves into the future and hold onto their heritage.

Good job on sediment workshop held earlier in the week. However, wave amplification issue still needs to be cleared up. The same data should be used for the models. Also, scientists aren't educators. Consider bringing in Dr. Kirby, a professor from Delaware, who understands the different wave models and is an educator who is good at understanding and conveying information to general public.