

# Coastal Fishing Communities Project

## Update on Efforts Related to Staff Recommendation #5

November 4, 2020

**Recommendation:** Direct staff to increase engagement and coordination with sister agencies when feasible on management decisions affecting California.

**Overview:** Commission-related actions in isolation cannot meet all needs of coastal fishing communities, and decisions made by different coastal management authorities can have a combined influence on the health of a coastal community. Community members have requested deeper Commission engagement with coastal management agencies to urge them to consider in their decision-making potential impacts to California's coastal fishing communities. Sister agencies that fishing community members emphasized include the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) related to federal fisheries management decisions for the West Coast, and the California Coastal Commission, related to coastal development permit approvals to facilitate awareness and coordination on relevant topics and projects.

### Progress by Focal Area

#### ***Commission and Department Initiatives***

- *Master plan for fisheries:* The Commission is inherently collaborative with the Department, with a strong partnership and reliance upon one another's expertise. The Department developed and the Commission adopted the [2018 master plan for fisheries](#). Chapter 11 ("Adapting to Climate Change") focuses on how climate change may impact California's fisheries and management strategies for preparing to maintain resilient ecological and socioeconomic systems; this is a lens through which the two agencies can continue to build collaborative projects relevant to coastal fishing communities.

#### ***Collaborations and Partner Efforts***

- *California Coastal Commission (CCC):* Stakeholders have cited the [California Coastal Act](#) (Public Resources Code, Section 30000 et seq.) to justify protecting and prioritizing harbor infrastructure in coastal planning and development decisions. The statute has specific provisions for maintaining commercial fishing infrastructure in ports and harbors. In 2017, the Commission directed staff to draft and send a letter to CCC in response to requests from fishing community stakeholders who participated in the coastal fishing communities meetings. The letter urged CCC to consider fishing community infrastructure and economic needs when considering coastal development projects. Further collaboration between CCC and the Commission will be necessary to enhance clarity on shared objectives.
- *California Ocean Protection Council (OPC):* Several documents released or supported by OPC call for inter-agency collaboration to meet OPC's goals of sustainable fisheries and climate change mitigation. Specific documents include OPC's [2020-2025 strategic plan](#), and a [2017 report](#), *Readying California's Fisheries for Climate Change*.

- *California Ocean Science Trust (OST):* A [report from a July 2019 guided learning workshop](#) summarizes concerns and potential management strategies to assist with coastal fishing community resilience under climate change. Emphasis was placed on the need to collaborate, specifically at a local level.
- *Collaborative fishing communities inter-agency workgroup:* Prompted by a Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) workshop (see federal efforts in next section), a committee of staff from the Commission, the Department, OPC, and OST convened and conferred about how best to engage each agency's specialized knowledge in climate change topics and how to leverage and influence federal momentum such that it could meet the needs of state-managed as well as federally-managed fisheries. The committee has not met regularly this year and could be reconvened as this project moves forward to keep all involved agencies up to date on each other's work and identify areas for potential collaboration.

### **Relevant External Actions and Models**

- *Federal fisheries management - "climate and communities" initiative:* PFMC is one of the key agencies with whom stakeholders are most interested in seeing the Commission collaborate. Most relevant to this project is the [PFMC Climate and Communities Initiative](#), an ecosystem-based fishery management initiative contained within the [PFMC Fishery Ecosystem Plan](#).
  - In 2018, Commission staff participated in a [Climate and Communities Initiative Workshop](#), hosted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on behalf of PFMC, as part of the scoping for the initiative. The results of the workshop have helped shape and focus PFMC's pursuit of the climate and communities initiative. Commission staff have continued to meet with Department representatives to the PFMC to find ways to harmonize PFMC's and the Commission's efforts.
  - Most recent activities of the initiative include a January 2020 workshop, [Developing Future Scenarios for Climate Change in the California Current Ecosystem](#), co-sponsored by TNC and PFMC, which detailed a set of climate scenarios and potential fishery impacts that could be used in conversation with fishermen in community resilience planning. Potential impacts will be discussed at an upcoming series of regional workshops with West Coast commercial fisheries community members.

### **Potential Next Steps**

Continue to track relevant issues in which other agencies are engaged and communicate where appropriate; continue to coordinate with the California interagency workgroup to facilitate information exchange and help further the Commission's goals in adjacent efforts.

### **Linkages to Other Staff Recommendations**

This recommendation is linked to SR 4 (*Engage legislative staff*), as both are ways in which the Commission could collaborate on issues that are outside the scope of its authority. Coordination with sister agencies has occurred as part of actions taken on almost all other recommendations (SR 1-4, 6-8).