

Ocean Resources Enhancement and Hatchery Program Ocean Resources Enhancement Advisory Panel Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 9, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach, and Microsoft TEAMS Video Conference

Attendees:

Ocean Resources Enhancement Advisory Panel Members (OREAP):

John Ballotti (sportfishing industry)

Gary Burke (commercial fishing industry)

Ken Franke (California commercial passenger fishing vessel industry)

Jim Hendricks (sportfishing industry)

Wayne Kotow (sportfishing industry)

Rachele Lopez, Rob Ross (commercial fishing industry)

Tony Vaught (aquaculture industry)

OREAP Member alternates:

Keith Moret (sportfishing industry)

Jojo Pemberton (sportfishing industry)

John Riordan (sportfishing industry)

Dallas Weaver (aquaculture industry)

OREAP Member (non-voting):

Luke Gardner (California SeaGrant)

Kirsten Ramey (California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW])

CDFW:

Kathryn Johnson and Valerie Taylor

California SeaGrant:

Susana Avila, Theresa Sinicrope Talley, Ph.D., and Ashleigh Palinkas

Guests and members of the public:

Kai Lorenzen, Ph.D. (Ocean Resources Enhancement and Hatchery Program [OREHP] Scientific Advisory Committee [SAC]), Mark Drawbridge (Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute [HSWRI]), Mike Shane (HSWRI), and Ruari MacNamara (HSWRI)

1. Introductions and announcements

Valerie Taylor and John Ballotti

2. Provide summary of SAC Genetic Study Peer Review Workshop which took place on February 22, 2023

Valerie Taylor and Kai Lorenzen, Ph.D.

- Peer review workshop of the South Carolina genetics study

- Relied on genetics expertise of members of the workshop and SAC members with genetics expertise.
- Led by Ellen Reiber and Tanya Darden in collaboration with Mark Drawbridge, Mike Shane, and Ruari MacNamara.
- First major new study after program evaluation in 2017 using archived broodstock tissue samples and juvenile samples.
 - Samples taken over the long history of the program can provide much information
 - Assessment of the genetic structure of the wild population and hatchery broodstock
 - Estimation of survival of hatchery fish in the wild
 - How might we use this information to guide operation of the program in the future?
- The reviewers, Mark Christie and Mike Tringali, are very experienced experts in very specific genetic analyses of parentage
 - Overall approach for assigning wild caught organism parentage was deemed suitable
 - Characterization of wild population structure and genetic health was reliable overall
 - One area of concern raised by both reviewers was the methods used to assign offspring to wild fish
 - Method could result in substantial false assignments
 - There are other methods that can be used that would be more reliable but that would require additional and, perhaps, substantial work
 - The reviewers came up with other methods and discussed them with the SCDNR team
 - South Carolina Department of Natural Resources team will conduct additional analyses to be presented in April 2023 to the SAC
 - Reanalysis of data and genotyping of additional samples that we know for sure are hatchery fish will help quantify those errors

3. Receive update on California Sea Grant OREHP Stakeholder Engagement Contract

Theresa Sinicrope Talley, Ph.D., Kai Lorenzen, Ph.D, and Ashleigh Palinkas

- The OREAP was given a presentation by Theresa Sinicrope Talley and Susana Avila
 - History of CASG's involvement
 - Situation assessment and stakeholder interviews to develop vision and options for OREHP through a collaborative process
 - Lack of consensus on the contribution of the program to enhancing the stock and fishery
 - Lack of consensus on the goal of the OREHP
 - Concern about OREHP panel representation

- Sunset provision
- Discussion on using workshops to engage a broader range of stakeholders and underrepresented voices
- Discussion on defining success
- Theresa, Kai, and Susana will come up with a proposal about the workshops and reach out to the OREAP

4. Receive update on recent hatchery, growout, field, and research operations from Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute (HSWRI)

Mark Drawbridge

- Utilizing netpens as acclimation pens and raising fish to a slightly larger size to increase post-release survival.
- 44,474 fish in 2022, which is the equivalent of about 158,580 8-inch fish.
- Financial constraints will result in lower biomass released in 2023 because Aqua Hedionda Lagoon pens haven't been stocked
- Small batch of larvae will likely be overwintered and released in 2024
- Broodstock collection
 - 58 adults in breeding pools; 38 subadults in isolation; and 13 potential broodfish in quarantine
 - Goal is to get 140-200 active broodstock
- Budget status and impacts
 - Formal proposal to increase budget will ultimately result in an additional \$173K for the FY23-24
 - Postponed new hires, reduced hours and reallocation of staff time to other projects
 - Shut down pumps, blowers, chillers, etc.
 - Reduced spring fish production from 45K to 15K fish and relocated larval rearing to Mission Bay facility
 - Life support system refurbishments, research, travel halted

5. Discussion and vote of #6 and #7 of the OREHP's goals and priorities as identified by the OREAP document

John Ballotti and OREAP

- Motion to approve goal #6 as written (Rob Ross and John Ballotti seconded the motion)
 - Discussion and call for vote
 - Motion passes (7 yays)
- Motion to approve goal #7 as written (John Ballotti and Rob Ross seconded the motion)
 - Discussion and call for vote
 - Motion passes (6 yays; Wayne not present during vote)
- Valerie will finalize the OREAP's Goals and Priorities document and send out to the OREAP next week

6. Receive and discuss California Department of Fish and Wildlife and HSWRI Research and Administrative Priorities List for the OREHP

Valerie Taylor, Mark Drawbridge, and OREAP

- Used HSWRI's 5-year plan and the 2017 Evaluation Report to create a living document that may be added to or updated as needed
- Priorities:
 - Broodstock collection - continuing efforts to collect new broodstock and replace aging population. CDFW to assist by sending staff out to help collect broodfish using CDFW vessel
 - Genetics research – additional analyses to be completed
 - Communication and Collaboration – bi-annual meeting with CDFW, HSWRI, OREAP and SAC chairs
 - Microsoft Teams group to share updates and documents
 - Health management
 - Post-release assessment
 - Population modeling
 - Adaptive management
 - Begin discussions and planning to finalize prioritization of the next OREHP species

7. Receive update on HSWRI contract amendment and discuss and vote on OREHP budget

Valerie Taylor and OREAP

- Valerie shared graphic that showed budget and contract timelines
- Discussion of spending authority/current allotment reverting back to \$1.3 million from \$1.8 million on July 1, 2025
- Discussion of budget subcommittee meeting findings
 - Need to request additional funds for the next 3-year contract cycle
 - Cost of genetics study is still unknown – the \$150K allotted by the OREAP will remain in the pot if not used this fiscal year
 - Want to increase spending authority to answer questions about the success of the program without affecting the prudent reserve
 - OREAP agrees to vote on the budget as currently presented and have the budget subcommittee put together a proposed budget with increased spending authority to present at the next meeting
- Motion to approve the proposed budget as presented (John Ballotti with Tony Vaught seconding the motion)
 - Motion passed unanimously (7 yays)
- Discussion on what to do with the remaining \$155K left in the FY22-23 budget
 - Wayne motions to allocate \$50K to broodstock and head collection expenses that will help inform genetics study
 - Motion passes unanimously (7 yays)

8. Public comment on agenda items and closing of meeting

Valerie Taylor and John Ballotti

- No public comments
- Discuss next meeting
 - Early June for next full in-person meeting
 - Budget sub-committee to meet in March/April
 - May – SAC genetics analyses review

Questions about the meeting agenda and minutes can be directed to the OREHP Coordinator, Valerie Taylor, at Valerie.Taylor@wildlife.ca.gov or OREHP@wildlife.ca.gov.

Meeting agendas and minutes can be found at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/OREHP/Advisory-Panel>