

Staff Summary for August 13-14, 2025

7A. Commission Executive Director's Report**Today's Item****Information** ☒**Action** ☐

Receive updates from the executive director and staff on items of note since the previous Commission meeting on June 11-12, 2025.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background**

The Commission employs an executive director to assist in conducting the Commission's operations and ensuring that its wide range of responsibilities and authorities are fulfilled daily. To ensure the ability to maintain functionality in all its capacities, the Commission has delegated various authorities to its executive director, who "...shall report to the Commission at each regular meeting on important delegated actions."

Today's report covers four topics:

- Justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) plan update
- JEDI awareness
- Personnel
- Delegated actions, including California Environmental Quality Act

JEDI Plan Update

Commission staff is engaged with KH Consulting Group (KHCG) to complete its external survey to better understand the perspectives and experiences of the Commission's current and potential stakeholders, with the goal of improving, expanding, and diversifying stakeholder engagement. The survey is being implemented in phases: the first round of survey outreach is complete, KHCG has tabulated the first round of stakeholder responses, and KHCG is now moving to implement the remaining phases of the survey of external and potential stakeholders with the assistance of the Department and external partners. All responses to the survey are kept confidential; only tabulated results will be shared with the Commission. Staff expects to share a survey report at the Commission's December meeting.

JEDI Awareness***Disability Pride Month***

This year marked the 35th anniversary of Disability Pride Month, celebrated in July, commemorating the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990. The observance recognizes the history, achievements and obstacles of people with disabilities. Ann Magill, who lives with cerebral palsy, created the emblem chosen to represent this observance in 2019.

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The flag is comprised of multiple muted colors symbolizing an array of experiences people with disabilities face:

- Red – physical disabilities
- Gold – cognitive and intellectual disabilities
- White – nonvisible and undiagnosed disabilities
- Blue – psychiatric disabilities
- Green – sensory disabilities
- Black – honors those who have died due to negligence, suicide, rebellion, and eugenics

Approximately one in four adults in the United States has a disability. This observance promotes disabilities as a natural part of human diversity rather than a deficit, and encourages inclusiveness. Recognizing the essential contributions people with disabilities have made to our state, the Governor signed a proclamation recognizing July as Disability Pride Month (Exhibit 2).

The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) held a month-long celebration featuring a panel discussion with disabled state workers who are working to make their departments more welcoming and inclusive, a park clean up, and a discussion with CNRA Secretary Wade Crowfoot and Department of Rehabilitation director titled, *“Leading Equitably: A Conversation with Kim Rutledge, Department of Rehabilitation’s Newest Leader”*. This year’s theme was *“Proud to Be Me,”* celebrating the power of authenticity, self-acceptance and visibility. For more information on CNRA’s observance, visit <https://resources.ca.gov/DisabilityPride>. Additional information on the national observance and the Americans with Disabilities Act can be found at <https://adaanniversary.org/>.

National Hispanic Heritage Month



Looking forward, National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from September 15 to October 15 to commemorate the liberation of Mexico and Central American nations of Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua from Spain. September 16 marks the anniversary of the Cry of Dolores, when Roman Catholic Priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla rang his church bell as a call to arms, triggering the start of the Mexican War of Independence in 1810. After a decade of war, New Spain was liberated and adopted Mexico as its official name.

President Lyndon Johnson first proclaimed Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968. The weeklong commemoration was changed to a monthlong celebration by President George H.W. Bush on September 14, 1989, to honor the significant contributions of Latino Americans to our country, including military service, activism, sports, science and public service. In celebration of California’s largest ethnic group and the positive impact Latino Americans have had on our country, the California Natural Resources Agency has chosen this year’s theme as *“Latino Leaders: Shaping California and our Futuro Together”*. For more information on CNRA’s observance activities, visit <https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Equity-and-Environmental-Justice/Celebrating-Cultural-Diversity/Latino-Heritage-Month>.

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Personnel

On August 1 we said farewell to Kimberly Rogers, our first environmental scientist (Commission advisors are senior environmental scientists). Kimi accepted a project assistant position at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, where she will support two international marine research projects. The Commission received authorization for a new limited-term environmental scientist position; recruitment is currently active with an August 20 application deadline. Staff expects to conduct interviews in the first week of September. For more information, visit

<https://calcareers.ca.gov/CalHrPublic/Jobs/JobPosting.aspx?JobControlId=487431>.

Delegated Actions, Including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The commission has delegated authority to its executive director to take actions necessary to comply with CEQA, the guidelines generally implementing CEQA, and the Commission's certified regulatory program approved under CEQA, including conducting – or causing to be conducted – initial studies and deciding whether to prepare draft environmental impact reports, negative declarations, mitigated negative declarations, or determinations of exemption.

Since the June 2025 meeting, your executive director determined that several actions are exempt from CEQA: a major amendment to an experimental fishing permit, a 90-day emergency regulation extension to add golden mussel to the list of restricted animals, regulatory amendments to market squid regulations, regulatory amendments to white sturgeon regulations, and an emergency regulation for groundfish in state waters.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [Staff Time Allocation and Activities](#), dated August 1, 2025
2. [State of California Disability Pride Month Proclamation](#), dated July 8, 2025

Motion (N/A)

California Fish and Game Commission Staff Time Allocation and Activities

August 1, 2025

This report identifies, for the months of June and July 2025, where California Fish and Game Commission staff (including limited term and temporary help) allocated its time in general activity categories, trends in staff time allocation, and examples of specific activities in which staff engaged.

General Time Allocation

Task Category	June Staff Time	July Staff Time
Regulatory Program	15%	14%
Non-Regulatory Programs	3%	4%
Commission and Committee Meetings	33%	27%
Legal Matters	3%	3%
External Affairs	8%	8%
Special Projects	3%	2%
Administration	24%	25%
Leave Time	11%	15%
Unfilled Positions ¹	7%	7%
Total Staff Time ²	107%	104%

¹ Unfilled positions are skewed downward due to contract and temporary help

² Total staff time is greater than 100% due to overtime

Trends

Time allocations of note for this period are *Regulatory Program*, *Commission and Committee Meetings*, and *Administration*.

Time in the *Regulatory Program* was elevated in both June and July due to a continued high number of rulemakings, a high level of complexity of current rulemakings, and staff time in responding to the Office of Administrative Law during its review and approval process.

In the *Commission and Committee Meeting* category, staff time was significantly elevated in July for the two-day Marine Resources Committee meeting. The long agenda, high volume of materials, and high level of public interest and participation contributed to increased staff time. Recently, staff has seen an increase in time necessary to prepare for and conduct Committee meetings.

Staff time in the *Administration* category remained high in June and July and reflects the time to plan for and begin compliance with Governor Newsom's *return to office* executive order. The order, which was scheduled to take effect July 1, 2025, at the last moment was delayed

until July 1, 2026. Additional time in this category resulted from planning and implementation of an all-day, offsite staff retreat for teambuilding and leadership development, recruitment planning for the 2026 California State Sea Grant fellow, recruitment efforts for the limited-term environmental scientist, and continued onboarding and training of the program manager.

Sample Activities for June 2025

- Collaborated with Department and California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) leadership on multiple joint policy and management issues, including:
 - Marine Protected Area (MPA) petitions, to discuss the MPA bin 2 petition assessment and collaborate on developing an evaluation framework
 - MPA management, by sharing insights and historical experience with visitors from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, alongside OPC and the Department
 - Strategic planning, by providing input to OPC staff and leadership on their draft strategic plan elements related to biodiversity, ecosystem protection, MPAs, fisheries management, and aquaculture
 - Statewide aquaculture action plan, through document reviews and ongoing discussions with other state aquaculture leaders
- Attended and provided public comment at the OPC June meeting related to the 30x30 coastal framework
- Met with a fisheries trust partner organization to explore co-implementation of the Commission's Coastal Fishing Communities Policy
- Participated in the Chronic Wasting Disease Interagency Task Force
- Participated in the California Legislature Outdoor Sporting Caucus annual trap shoot
- Developed solicitation/bid materials for next Commission meeting video streaming contractor process
- Attended a public workshop hosted by the Department regarding a California halibut trawl fisheries bycatch assessment
- As part of its ongoing commitment to explore issues related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, staff participated in a presentation and discussion on *Pride and LGBTQ+ in the Outdoors*
- Prepared for recruitment of 2026 California State Sea Grant fellow
- Prepared for and conducted one publicly noticed meeting (Commission) and prepared for one publicly noticed meeting (Marine Resources Committee)

Sample Activities for July 2025

- Collaborated with Department and OPC leadership on multiple joint policy and management issues, including:
 - Aquaculture, by providing input into OPC's draft statewide aquaculture action plan individually and through meetings of the State Aquaculture Leadership Team

- Water quality, through discussions with OPC colleagues to learn about their work on water quality issues in marine and estuarine environments and to explore topics of Commission interest
 - MPAs, through continued dialogue and coordination to develop an MPA petition evaluation framework and to advance management and policy topics scheduled for Marine Resources Committee discussion
 - Ocean fisheries, by providing input to OPC and the Department on a draft climate-ready fisheries strategy
- Attended the California Natural Resources Agency’s (CNRA) public listening session for the draft tribal stewardship policy and toolkit
 - Participated in the monthly CNRA tribal affairs meeting
 - Attended the CNRA’s webinar, “Cutting Through the Noise: Federal Impacts on California Priorities and What We’re Doing About It”
 - Attended Department-led stakeholder call regarding bull kelp harvest regulations and a stakeholder meeting regarding barred sand bass
 - Participated in a monthly Pacific Coast Ocean Restoration meeting facilitated by The Nature Conservancy to keep abreast of kelp restoration and monitoring projects occurring on the north coast
 - Reinstated a joint regulatory coordination meeting with the Department Regulations Unit
 - All staff participated in a presentation and discussion on *Tools for Overcoming Negative Workplace Experiences*, which provided staff with tools to resolve negative interactions in the work environment, with portions dedicated to the diversity of personality types, consideration for others, and ways to achieve justice for oneself when treated unfairly
 - All staff participated in a presentation and discussion on *Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage month*
 - Prepared for and conducted one publicly noticed meeting (Marine Resources Committee) and prepared for two publicly noticed meetings (Tribal Committee and Commission)

Sample Tasks for the General Allocation Categories

Regulatory Program

- Coordinate with the Department to develop timetables and rulemaking documents
- Prepare and file notices, re-notices, and initial/final statements of reasons
- Prepare administrative records
- Track and respond to public comments
- Consult, research, and respond to inquiries from the Office of Administrative Law
- Facilitate California Environmental Quality Act document review, certifications of findings, and filings with the state clearinghouse

Non-Regulatory Program

- Strategic planning
- Department partnerships in jointly developing management plans and concepts

- Develop, review, and amend Commission policies
- Review and process California Endangered Species Act petitions
- Manage aquaculture and kelp harvest lease applications and amendments
- Review and process experimental fishing permit applications and amendments

Commission and Committee Meetings and Support

- Research and compile subject-specific information
- Develop and distribute meeting agendas and materials
- Conduct agenda and debrief meetings
- Prepare meeting outcomes, audio files, and voting records
- Develop and distribute after-meeting letters
- Conduct onsite meeting management
- Process submitted meeting materials
- Provide commissioner support

Legal Matters

- Public Records Act requests
- California Law Review Commission
- Process appeals and accusations
- Respond to litigation
- Process kelp and state water bottom leases
- Prepare administrative records

External Affairs

- Engage with stakeholders
- Maintain state, federal, and tribal government relations
- Process and analyze non-regulatory requests
- Process and analyze regulation change petitions
- Engage and educate legislative staff, monitor legislation
- Respond to general public inquiries
- Review and respond to correspondence
- Website maintenance
- Workshops

Special Projects

- Coastal Fishing Communities
- Streamlining routine regulatory actions

Administration

- Staff training and development
- Purchases and payments
- Contract management
- Personnel management
- Budget development and tracking
- Health and safety oversight
- Internal processes and procedures
- Document archival

Leave Time

Examples are PLP 2025, Holidays, Vacation or annual leave, Sick, Jury duty, and Bereavement.

PROCLAMATION

California joins communities around the nation in recognizing July as Disability Pride Month, an opportunity to celebrate the many ways that people living with disabilities – whether visible or invisible, mobility or cognitive, vision or hearing, learning or sensory, developmental or acquired – add to the diversity and strength of our state.

Observed in July, Disability Pride Month marks the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a major civil rights milestone signed into law on July 26, 1990. Sponsored by California Congressman Tony Coelho, the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, removing barriers to employment, transportation, public services, and other critical areas.

California is home to more than 7 million adults with disabilities and provides one in eight kids with disability services in schools. For decades, our state has played a pivotal role in promoting the inclusion and integration of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. In partnership with the Legislature, the Newsom Administration is working to expand educational opportunities, employment options, health, and homecare access, civil rights, and community living for people of all ages with disabilities. The state also continues to prioritize accessibility of all state services and is deepening our commitment to employment opportunities for people with disabilities within state service.

As we celebrate Disability Pride Month, let us reflect on the essential contributions of people with disabilities to our communities, our state, and our nation, and reaffirm our commitment to their rights and independence.


NOW THEREFORE I, ELENI KOUNALAKIS, Acting Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim July 2025 as "Disability Pride Month."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 8th day of July 2025.




ELENI KOUNALAKIS
Acting Governor of California

ATTEST:


SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State