



Coastal Fishing Communities Project: Review of Staff Recommendations for Potential Commission Focus

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Marine Resources Committee
California Fish and Game Commission

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Overview



- Recap Coastal Fishing Communities (CFC) Project history and phases
- Review staff recommendations (SRs) from 2019 report
- Highlight progress and status of SRs
- Discussion and next steps: Explore potential priorities and areas of focus moving forward

Project History and Phases

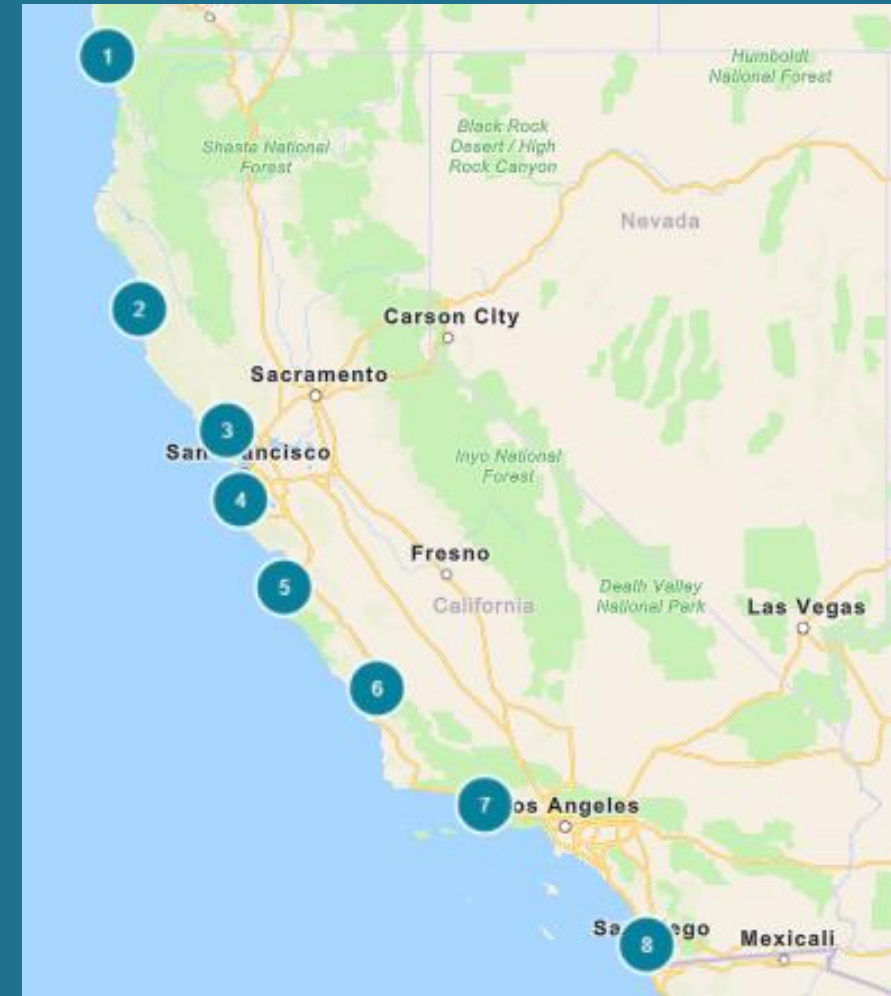


- Phase 1: Coastwide and Regional Meetings
(2016 – 2018)
- Phase 2: Staff Recommendations and Analyses
(2019 – 2021)
- Phase 3: Policy Development and Implementation
(2021– now)

Phase 1: Coastwide and Regional Meetings



- Goal: Identify CFC resilience priorities and uncover potential opportunities to support
- Eight coastal community meetings
- Key themes and regional perspectives



Phase 2: Staff Recommendations and Analyses



- Staff synthesis report on CFC meetings (2019)
- Ten staff recommendations (SRs) for exploration
- MRC requested staff further analyze recommendations to assist in future discussion or action

**California Fish and Game Commission
Marine Resources Committee
Staff Synthesis Report on
California Coastal Fishing Communities Meetings, 2016 - 2018
Final December 2019**

Note: This is a revised final version of a report provided to the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) in July 2018. Revisions, based on public comments, were presented to MRC in July 2019 and in December, based on MRC recommendation, this final report was approved. MRC continues to work on this project.

Federal and California's state fisheries laws recognize the importance and value of fishing industries and communities to economic and social well-being and have established guidance for their consideration in management actions. The federal Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which governs fisheries management in United States federal waters (from 3 to 200 nautical miles offshore), mandates fisheries management standards for providing sustained participation of fishery-dependent communities and for minimizing economic impacts to those communities. Commonly referred to as the Magnuson-Stevens Act, it provides a definition for the term "fishing community".¹

While state law in California (covering from shore to 3 nautical miles offshore) does not define "fishing communities," the California Marine Life Management Act does establish goals for recognizing fishing communities when pursuing fisheries management program goals designed to address biological sustainability. The additional goals focus on observing the interests of and minimizing adverse impacts to fisheries participants, small-scale fisheries, coastal communities, and local economies.²

To consider how to more systematically approach meeting state and federal goals, the California

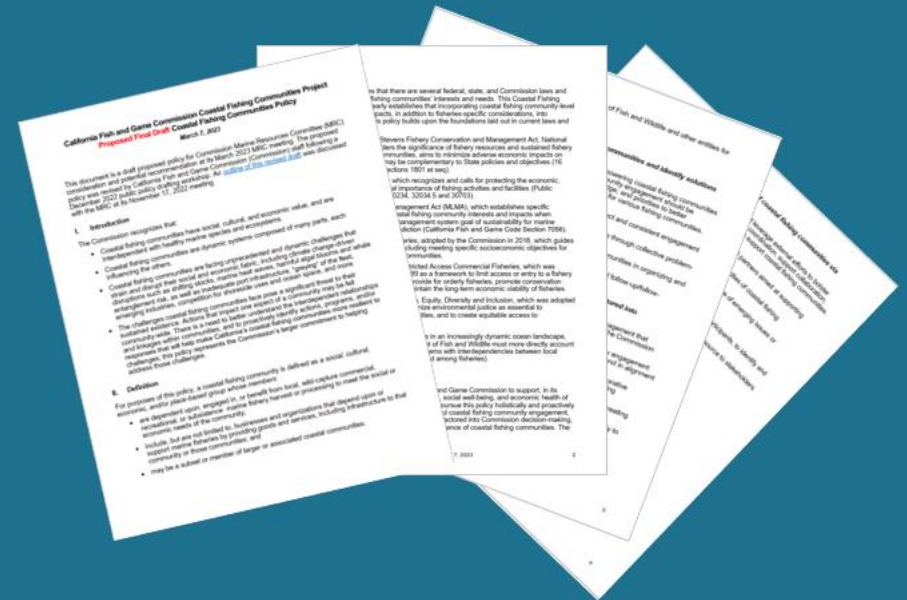
¹ Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Public Law 104-297, Sec. 3.(17); defines the term "Fishing Community" as "a community which is substantially dependent on or substantially engaged in the harvest or processing of fishery resources, to meet social and economic needs, and includes fishing vessel owners, operators, and crew and United States fish processors that are based in such community."

² Marine Life Management Act, California Fish and Game Code Section 7056 et sec. Section 7056 and subdivisions 7056(i)- 7056(m) state: "In order to achieve the primary fishery management goal of sustainability, every sport and commercial marine fishery under the jurisdiction of the state shall be managed under a system whose objectives include all of the following: ... (i) The fishery management system observes the long-term interests of people dependent on fishing for food, livelihood, or recreation. (j) The adverse impacts of fishery management on small-scale fisheries, coastal communities, and local economies are minimized. (k) Collaborative and cooperative approaches to management, involving fishery participants, marine scientists, and other interested parties are strongly encouraged, and appropriate mechanisms are in place to resolve disputes such as access, allocation, and gear conflicts. (l) The management system is proactive and responds quickly to changing environmental conditions and market or other socioeconomic factors and to the concerns of fishery participants. (m) The management system is periodically reviewed for effectiveness in achieving sustainability goals and for fairness and reasonableness in its interaction with people affected by management.

Phase 2: Staff Recommendations and Analyses



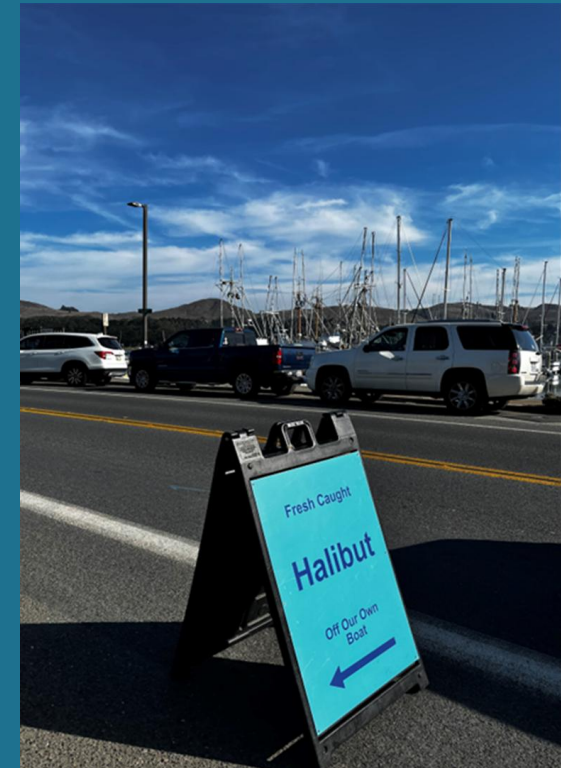
- Reports summarizing efforts related to the ten SRs (November 2020)
- Analyses of feasibility of implementing SRs (five of ten; March 2021)
 - Basic informational needs
 - Regulatory and policy context
 - Potential Commission role
 - Costs and benefits



Phase 2: Outcomes



- Commission approved Marine Resources Committee recommendation to pursue SR 1: *Develop and adopt a CFC policy and definition* (April 2021)
- Advanced to Phase 3 for policy development
- Paused other SR analyses





Phase 3: Policy Development and Implementation

- Policy drafting (2021-2023)
- Policy adopted (February 2024)
 - A lens for considering remaining SRs
- MRC direction: Revisit initial SRs for status and potential action (July 2025)



2019 Initial Staff Recommendations



Number		Recommendation	Status
SR 1		Develop and adopt a policy and definition for coastal fishing communities	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 2		Review the Commission's policy on restricted access commercial fisheries	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
SR 3		Approve specific, small-scale projects to test and evaluate proposed new approaches	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 4		Engage legislative staff to pursue adjustments to laws as ideas are refined, if warranted to support fishing community adaptability	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 5		Direct staff to increase engagement and coordination with sister agencies , when feasible, on management decision affecting California coastal communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

= Completed

= Not initiated

= In progress

= Ongoing

2019 Initial Staff Recommendations



Number		Recommendation	Status
SR 6		Explore pathways for authorizing community-based adaptable fishery structures (e.g., community permit banks or risk pools).	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 7		Explore filling data needs through collaborative research and data collection.	<input type="radio"/>
SR 8		Survey communities, commercial and recreational fishers, and processors about their priorities for Commission focus.	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 9		Explore a model of “ fishing community sustainability plans ” (CSPs) and possible development of a state fisheries-focused module to add to existing CSPs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
SR 10		Continue to develop and understanding of climate change impacts on fisheries and fishing communities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

= Completed

= Not initiated

= In progress

= Ongoing

Committee Discussion and Next Steps



- Identify potential priorities and focus areas for 2026
- Flag specific SRs for further development
- Provide staff direction for additional efforts and development
- Next MRC discussion: March 2026





THANK YOU!



- Coastal fishing community members and organizations
- Non-governmental organizations and academic partners
- Agency representatives, especially California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Ocean Protection Council, and California Ocean Science Trust
- Past Sea Grant State Fellows