Coastal Fishing Communities Project:

Opportunities for Advancement through a Draft Climate-Ready Fisheries Strategy

Presented November 12, 2026 to the
Marine Resources Committee
California Fish and Game Commission

Amanda Specht
2026 California Sea Grant State Fellow
California Fish and Game Commission



Overview

- November 2025 Recap; Updates
- OPC Presentation on Draft Climate-Ready Fisheries Strategy
- Staff Review: CFC Staff Recommendations with Greatest Potential to Advance
- Modified Recommendation for MRC



Tuna Harbor Dockside Market, Kimi Rogers

November 2025 MRC Meeting

- Summarized progress on ten CFC Project Staff Recommendations (SRs)
- Discussed ongoing priorities for coastal fishing communities
- Recommended staff identify options to advance and prioritize SRs considering resource needs



Updates for Today's Discussion

- Staff focus since November 2025
- Pursuit of CFC Policy and SRs by engaging in development of a climate-ready fisheries strategy



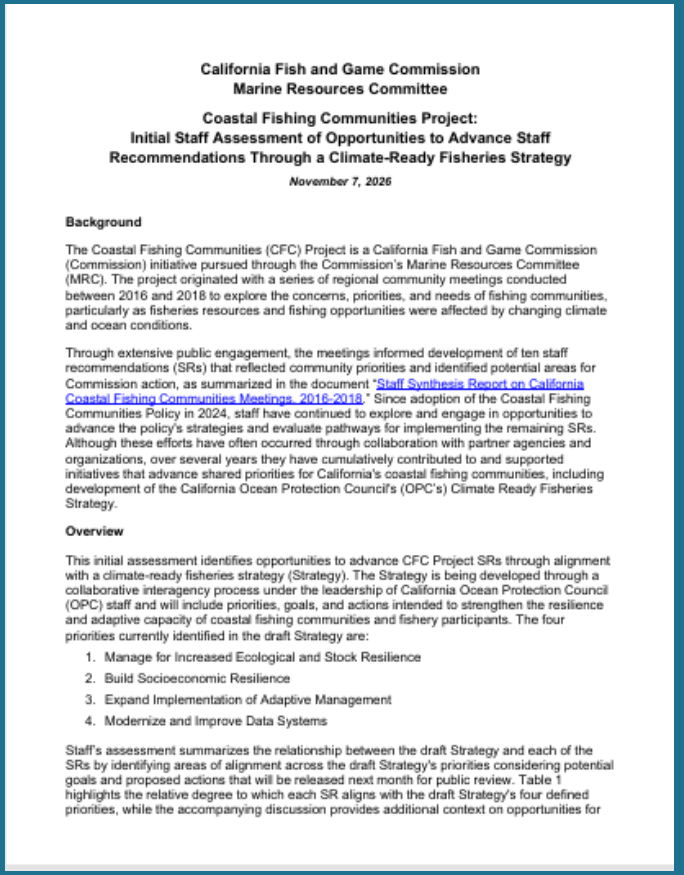
Updates for Today's Discussion

- Staff focus since November 2025
- Pursuit of CFC Policy and SRs by engaging in development of a climate-ready fisheries strategy
- **Staff review of SRs advanced via the draft Strategy**



Review: Advancing CFC Project SRs

- CFC Policy and SRs informed draft Strategy development
- Staff review identifies near-term opportunities to advance SRs via the Strategy
- Advancement pathways:
  - *Directly Advanced*
  - *Potential Support for Future Implementation*
  - *Not Specifically Identified*



California Fish and Game Commission
Marine Resources Committee

Coastal Fishing Communities Project:
Initial Staff Assessment of Opportunities to Advance Staff Recommendations Through a Climate-Ready Fisheries Strategy

November 7, 2026

Background

The Coastal Fishing Communities (CFC) Project is a California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) initiative pursued through the Commission's Marine Resources Committee (MRC). The project originated with a series of regional community meetings conducted between 2016 and 2018 to explore the concerns, priorities, and needs of fishing communities, particularly as fisheries resources and fishing opportunities were affected by changing climate and ocean conditions.

Through extensive public engagement, the meetings informed development of ten staff recommendations (SRs) that reflected community priorities and identified potential areas for Commission action, as summarized in the document "Staff Synthesis Report on California Coastal Fishing Communities Meetings, 2016-2018." Since adoption of the Coastal Fishing Communities Policy in 2024, staff have continued to explore and engage in opportunities to advance the policy's strategies and evaluate pathways for implementing the remaining SRs. Although these efforts have often occurred through collaboration with partner agencies and organizations, over several years they have cumulatively contributed to and supported initiatives that advance shared priorities for California's coastal fishing communities, including development of the California Ocean Protection Council's (OPC's) Climate Ready Fisheries Strategy.

Overview

This initial assessment identifies opportunities to advance CFC Project SRs through alignment with a climate-ready fisheries strategy (Strategy). The Strategy is being developed through a collaborative interagency process under the leadership of California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) staff and will include priorities, goals, and actions intended to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of coastal fishing communities and fishery participants. The four priorities currently identified in the draft Strategy are:

1. Manage for Increased Ecological and Stock Resilience
2. Build Socioeconomic Resilience
3. Expand Implementation of Adaptive Management
4. Modernize and Improve Data Systems

Staff's assessment summarizes the relationship between the draft Strategy and each of the SRs by identifying areas of alignment across the draft Strategy's priorities considering potential goals and proposed actions that will be released next month for public review. Table 1 highlights the relative degree to which each SR aligns with the draft Strategy's four defined priorities, while the accompanying discussion provides additional context on opportunities for

Directly Advanced (via Draft Strategy)

Staff Recommendation (SR)	P1	P2	P3	P4
SR 1: Develop and adopt a policy and definition for coastal fishing communities *[and implement]*	✓	✓	✓	✓
SR 5: Direct staff to increase engagement and coordination with sister agencies, when feasible, on management decisions affecting California coastal communities		✓	✓	✓
SR 7: Explore filling data needs through collaborative research and data collection		✓	✓	✓
SR 10: Continue to develop an understanding of climate change impacts on coastal fisheries and coastal fishing communities	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority 1 (P1) = Manage for Increased Ecological and Stock Resilience
P2 = Build Socioeconomic Resilience
P3 = Expand Implementation of Adaptive Management
P4 = Modernize and Improve Data Systems

Potential Support for Future Implementation

Staff Recommendation (SR)	P1	P2	P3	P4
SR 2: Review of the Commission's policy on restricted access commercial fisheries		✓		
SR 3: Approve specific, small-scale projects to test and evaluate proposed new approaches		✓	✓	
SR 6: Explore pathways for possible community-based adaptable fishery structures (e.g., community permit banks or risk pools) to be authorized		✓		
SR 8: Survey communities, commercial and recreational fishers, and processors about their priorities for Commission focus		✓		

P1 = Manage for Increased Ecological and Stock Resilience
P2 = Build Socioeconomic Resilience
P3 = Expand Implementation of Adaptive Management
P4 = Modernize and Improve Data Systems

Potential Support for Future Implementation (continued)

Staff Recommendation (SR)	P1	P2	P3	P4
SR 8: Survey communities, commercial and recreational fishers, and processors about their priorities for Commission focus		✓		
SR 9: Explore a model of "fishing community sustainability plans" (CSPs) and possible development of a state fisheries-based module to add to existing CSPs		✓		

Priority 1 (P1) = Manage for Increased Ecological and Stock Resilience
P2 = Build Socioeconomic Resilience
P3 = Expand Implementation of Adaptive Management
P4 = Modernize and Improve Data Systems

Not Specifically Identified

Staff Recommendation (SR)	P1	P2	P3	P4
SR 4: Engage legislative staff to pursue adjustments to laws as ideas are refined, if warranted to support fishing community adaptability				

Priority 1 (P1) = Manage for Increased Ecological and Stock Resilience
P2 = Build Socioeconomic Resilience
P3 = Expand Implementation of Adaptive Management
P4 = Modernize and Improve Data Systems

Modified Recommendation for MRC

- Continue engagement in Strategy development
- Leverage Strategy actions to advance CFC Policy priorities and SRs where feasible
- Prioritize SRs with most immediate opportunities to be “Directly Advanced” through Strategy actions
- For SRs categorized as “Potential Support for Future Implementation:”
  - monitor Strategy actions that may provide future support
  - explore potential partnership, funding or other collaborative pathways for advancement



Tuna Harbor Dockside Market, Kimi Rogers

THANK YOU!

For more information on the Coastal Fishing Communities Project visit https://fgc.ca.gov/Committees/Marine/Coastal-Fishing-Communities-Project -

Email: fgc@fgc.ca.gov