

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mike Yaun, Interim Executive Director, California Fish and Game Commission
CC: Susan Ashcraft, Interim Deputy Director, California Fish and Game Commission
FROM: Michael DeLapa, Interim Executive Director, California Ocean Science Trust
DATE: March 30, 2016
REGARDING: North Central Coast Community Engagement: Sharing the *State of California North Central Coast Report for Marine Protected Areas*

California Ocean Science Trust, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW,) and California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), developed a comprehensive State of the Region Report (*State of the California North Central Coast: A Summary of the Marine Protected Area Monitoring Program 2010-2015*). The State of the Region Report includes a wide portfolio of products developed by the North Central Coast MPA Baseline Program and partners from 2010-2015. The report was developed to provide a comprehensive science foundation to inform the California Fish and Game Commission's five-year management review of the region's MPAs, and serve as a resource to the public.

Ocean Science Trust and its partners are committed to developing and maintaining an engaged community to support MPA monitoring and management. Community involvement is important to ensuring that data collected to inform decision making reflects local knowledge, expertise, and priorities. All North Central Coast reports, data, and outreach products are shared publicly on OceanSpaces.org/nccsotr.

Working in coordination with CDFW and OPC, Ocean Science Trust initiated community engagement efforts throughout the North Central Coast in early 2015 to:

- (Re)introduce Ocean Science Trust to members of the North Central Coast ocean community and continue to support and maintain open lines of communication with key leaders.
- Learn about the most effective ways to connect and communicate with key audiences (e.g., tribal governments, fishing communities, environmental organizations, citizen scientists, academic institutions, etc.), including how local community members would like to receive baseline results and reporting.
- Provide the North Central Coast ocean community with a status of ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management of North Central Coast MPAs.
- Present the State of the Region Report to help audiences build understanding and awareness of MPA monitoring data/results from the baseline period.
- Explore local priorities for long-term monitoring, including the potential role of partnerships.

Over the past twelve months, Ocean Science Trust and its partners designed and implemented a suite of formal and informal engagement strategies, including:

- Conducting tribal outreach (for additional details, see the Tribal Engagement Summary, attached to the Memo titled *Summary of the North Central Coast State of the Region Report*, submitted to the Fish and Game Commission on January 28, 2016).
- Identifying and subsequently working with a group of “key communicators” (i.e., leaders with access to key constituencies across diverse local ocean communities).
- Conducting informal informational interviews with community leaders.
- Attending local community events.
- Presenting at the Western Society of Naturalists meeting.
- Hosting a series of community gatherings and small group discussions throughout the North Central Coast.
- Utilizing traditional media and social media to promote baseline results.
- Releasing a North Central Coast Monitoring Survey and interactive results dashboard.

Each of these activities is described below.

Engaged with North Central Coast Tribes: Ocean Science Trust is deeply invested in establishing an open dialogue with North Central Coast tribes, and exploring opportunities to collaborate and partner on shared areas of interest related to MPA monitoring. Please see the Tribal Engagement Summary for a full discussion of tribal engagement efforts in this region from 2013-2015.

Key Communicators: Guided by existing relationships and contacts in the region, as well as information gathered during initial scoping interviews conducted in late 2013, Ocean Science Trust developed a list of 35+ active key communicators to support local engagement efforts. These individuals have direct access to our primary target audiences, and are willing to play a liaison role to disseminate information and encourage involvement in community discussions. Key communicators have helped to inform appropriate communications tools and mechanisms, identify local events to attend to share baseline results and build relationships, and provide feedback on materials development. Key communicators have also highlighted the State of the Region Report via e-newsletter articles, blogs, and social media posts in an effort to share key findings with their constituents. Ocean Science Trust maintains regular communication with this group, providing progress updates and soliciting support.

Informational Interviews: In Spring 2015, Ocean Science Trust conducted informal interviews with key communicators to (re)introduce Ocean Science Trust and the baseline program, learn how to engage with the local community, explore existing research and monitoring activities in the region, and identify community-led events that might be appropriate for Ocean Science Trust to participate in to share baseline results. Twenty-six informational interviews captured perspectives from a range of key

audiences, including tribal, state and local government, fishing (commercial and recreational), citizen science, academic, and environmental nonprofit organizations.

Attended Local Community Events: Prior to the completion and release of the North Central Coast State of the Region Report, Ocean Science Trust attended three local, community-led events. Participation in these events offered Ocean Science Trust an opportunity to share resources and timelines for North Central Coast baseline reporting, announce the upcoming release of the State of the Region Report, and engage informally to learn about local community priorities for monitoring. The three events Ocean Science Trust attended were:

- *Discover the Coast* at Point Arena, hosted by the Bureau of Land Management (August 1, 2015)
- *Success Stories for California Marine Life*, movie and discussion series hosted by The Bay Institute and Aquarium of the Bay (September 17, 2015)
- *First Annual Half Moon Bay “Fish and Fleet” Festival*, hosted by the Half Moon Bay Fishing Association (September 27, 2015)

Presented at the Western Society of Naturalists (WSN) Meeting: The WSN meeting is an annual gathering of scientists and graduate students with a general focus on marine ecology. Over 600 attendees participated in the November 2015 meeting, which was hosted by Ocean Science Trust and included a specific focus on “Marine Science Informing Management”. This theme provided the opportunity to showcase some of the work produced for the North Central Coast State of the Region report, including:

- 22 talks in MPA sessions, and 15 talks in Long-Term Monitoring sessions
- 7 talks specific to the North Central Coast research, monitoring, and management (presented by CDFW, Ocean Science Trust, and North Central Coast MPA Baseline Program researchers)
- 3 posters specific to the North Central Coast research, monitoring, and management (presented by CDFW and Ocean Science Trust)
- 3 exhibitor tables distributing the State of the Region Report and information on the complete portfolio of supporting documents (presented by CDFW, OPC, and Oceanspaces)
- North Central Coast MPA Baseline Program projects presented during the Plenary presentation

Hosted Community Gatherings and Small Group Discussions: A series of formal and informal gatherings were convened throughout the North Central Coast to continue building relationships with members of the local ocean community and share baseline reporting.

Community Gatherings - Ocean Science Trust, in coordination with CDFW and OPC, held a series of community gatherings throughout the North Central Coast to share the results of the North Central Coast MPA Baseline Program and related assessments. Members of the North Central Coast ocean community were invited to gather in an informal setting to: learn about the recently released North Central Coast State of the Region Assessment, including how baseline results may be useful to community interests; provide insights on how to make the baseline results widely accessible to the local ocean community; and begin discussing monitoring activities beyond 2015, including opportunities for partnership building and broadening the knowledge base that informs MPA monitoring in the region.

Small Group Discussions - Ocean Science Trust also met with community leaders over informal, one-on-one conversations (or “cups of tea”) as another opportunity to learn about monitoring interests and priorities. These conversations also provided a venue to discuss specific projects and/or key findings of baseline monitoring results, as well as ways to maintain an open line of communication with key audiences.

A [Summary of Key Themes](http://bit.ly/NCC_keythemes) (http://bit.ly/NCC_keythemes) from these meetings was shared with attendees, as well as on OceanSpaces.org, to help inform future community engagement and long-term MPA monitoring.

Additional details:

- Community gatherings were held in three locations:
 - Gualala (*December 1, 2015*)
 - Bodega Bay (*December 2, 2015*)
 - Half Moon Bay (*December 3, 2015*)
- More than 120 community members attended these events, including tribal members, commercial and recreational fishermen, citizen scientists, environmental organizations, educational institutions, researchers, and community members with general interest in the MPA monitoring and ocean health.
- Nine “cups of tea” were held with local community members to discuss MPA monitoring in-depth.

Communicated Broadly through Traditional Media and Social Media Platforms: Radio and newspaper coverage, coupled with social media, offered additional mechanisms to broadly share baseline results.

Details include:

- Radio broadcasts
 - KQED (*December 1, 2015*)
 - KCBS (*Dec 7, 2015*)
- Newspaper articles
 - Daily Journal Local News
 - Press Democrat
 - Marin Independent Journal
 - Independent Coast Observer
 - Half Moon Bay Review
 - San Mateo Daily Journal
- Social media coverage
 - The State of the Region Report and stories, in addition to information about the community gatherings, were shared in blogs, e-newsletters, Facebook posts, Tweets, community calendars, email listservs, and other venues. Information was additionally shared via the website OceanSpaces.org and the MPA Collaborative Network.
 - OceanSpaces.org, the website which hosts the State of the Region Report and portfolio of products, served as a well-used resource for the public. Analytics describing site visitation as of January 5, 2015 include:

- 1460 pageviews (across the seven pages the comprise the Assessment)
- 665 downloads of the report *State of the California North Central Coast: A Summary of the Marine Protected Area Monitoring Program 2010-2015* and portfolio products, from the landing website (www.OceanSpaces.org/nccsotr)
- Visitors reached the site from a number of channels, including Direct links, Google searches, Oceansciencetrust.org, OceanSpaces Newsletter, Yubanet.com, Facebook, Twitter, and OPC.ca.gov.

Conducted a Monitoring Survey and Released the Monitoring Survey Results Dashboard: In August 2015, Ocean Science Trust released the North Central Coast Monitoring Survey. The survey is designed to identify the geographic and temporal coverage of monitoring activities inside and outside of the region's MPAs, as well as assess the compatibility of those monitoring activities with the metrics and priorities outlined in the North Central Coast MPA Monitoring Plan. Ocean Science Trust, CDFW, and OPC will use the publicly available survey results to help design and implement a partnership-based plan for long-term monitoring inside and outside North Central Coast MPAs. Details include:

- The [Monitoring Survey](http://bit.ly/NCC_monitoringsurvey) (http://bit.ly/NCC_monitoringsurvey) was launched on August 2015. As of March 2016, the survey was completed by 14 organizations, with 21 projects, and a total of 2096 sampling sites across all North Central Coast projects. The survey will remain live indefinitely, allowing new programs to participate as they are developed to maintain an up-to-date record of current capacity.
- The Monitoring Survey Results Dashboard (<http://tools.oceanspaces.org/>) provides live updates of any new survey results, allowing an accurate representation of monitoring activities taking place within the region.