



West Coast OCEAN ALLIANCE

August 2022

Member Call

SUMMARY

August 5, 2022

Attendees

West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA) Staff: John Hansen (WCOA Coordinator), Marisa Nixon (WCOA & WCODP)

West Coast Ocean Data Portal (WCODP) Staff:

State Staff: Patty Snow (OR DLCD), Caren Braby (ODFW/PFMC), Jennifer Mattox (CA State Lands Commission), Katie Robinson-Fillip (CA State Lands Commission), Tanya Hadadd (OR DLCD)

Tribal Members/Staff: Mark Healy (Coquille Indian Tribe), Illeana Alexander (Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians), Sara Shen (Strategic Earth, listening on behalf of Trinidad Rancheria), Andrea Sumerau (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians), Natalie Lowell (Makah Tribe), Joe Schumacker (Quinault Indian Nation), Carl Merkle (Umatilla Tribal Nation)

Federal Staff: Necy Sumait (BOEM), Kris Wall (NOAA), Maggie Dour (Navy), Stef Stavrakas (USFWS), Frank Pendleton (BOEM), Liesl Olson (USCG), Jessica Curran (Navy), Michelle St. Martin (USFWS), Toby Garfield (NOAA), George Galasso (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary), Katie Wrubel (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary), Heather Schlosser (US Army Corps of Engineers), Dana Goodson (Udall Foundation)

CALL SUMMARY

Recap: WCOA Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) Funding Proposal

John Hansen (WCOA) provided an overview of the WCOA ROP funding proposal draft.

- The first version of the funding package went out in March 2022. We worked through the spring and summer to refund the funding proposal. NOAA announced the funding on

June 29, 2022. The proposal went to NOAA for review on August 5. Funding will tentatively be disbursed in December 2022.

- The draft I sent to day is in the format required by NOAA. At the beginning, there is a table of contents and an introduction. The next section is the project narrative which gives the description of what we are trying to accomplish – it's the core of why we are doing the work and what we will deliver. Next is the budget which details how we'll spend the money. The project overview is the roadmap of what is in the proposal and what dollar amounts are attached to it. Lastly there's a milestone schedule.
- This draft will be submitted to NOAA staff and then we'll work through details with them. We'll also work with our fiscal sponsor as well.
- Kris Wall (NOAA): NOAA will be reviewing the proposals starting this week. We're really going to be reviewing for content to ensure the alignment with the intention of this funding program as directed by Congress and to make sure the budget is categorized and documented appropriately. I'm not anticipating major changes. You'll know more later next week before the finals come in on the 19th.

John Hansen (WCOA) provided an overview of the Task Overview attachment of the proposal.

- I see some really key pieces coming into focus that are going to give us capacity to do more work and to manage these projects effectively. We'll be engaging you all more actively on this work. In year two we'll have funding to implement more projects and more staff support.
- The first two tasks are related to strategic planning. This will be an opportunity to have really in depth discussions with all of you and maybe some stakeholders. This is required by NOAA for all regions receiving funds, but we also need it. This will be the roadmap of the next five years of our work.
- We have \$200k for implementation of the plan. It's pretty vague so it can be used to implement what we put into the plan.
- The next three items are staff. The Executive Director position is my position which will provide oversight and leadership. The two new positions will be a Project Coordinator and a Tribal Coordinator. They will provide projects we will be launching and support the work you all are doing. We need to hit the ground right now for recruiting and having the RFPs ready so we can be ready as soon as the funding is ready to go.
- Item six is a West Coast Fellowship Program which would support three new fellows likely going through West Coast Sea Grant offices. Fellows would potentially start Fall 2023 or early 2024. They could be placed in State or Tribal offices, potentially Federal as well.
- The next three items are meetings. The annual Ocean Alliance Summit, a wind energy summit, and a Tribal summit. These are in-person gatherings. These will be really key opportunities to bring our members together. The Tribal Summit would likely be next Spring, a Wind Energy Summit next summer and our Ocean Alliance Summit in the fall. The Ocean Alliance Summit will likely be the culmination of our strategic planning effort. Funding includes participant travel. The Wind Energy Summit would be a convening of not only our members, but other stakeholders, to collaborate on what west coast wind looks like. The proposal has more details about each of these meetings.
- Item 10 is around aquaculture. We would develop an inventory of existing and proposed aquaculture projects. The second phase would be focused on best practices.

- The next two items are focused on Tribes. We have \$100k over years one and two for a West Coast Ocean Planning grant program. This money is intended to ensure Tribal governments that want to participate in the Alliance are able to. This is meant to support their capacity to engage with this group. If there is funding left over, the funds would go to support for specific Tribal projects.
- Item 12 is the Tribal engagement training program. This is meant to build on the Tribal engagement guidance document.
- The last one is for communication support to increase the visibility of the Alliance and do more effective outreach. In year two as we develop new products we want support to develop one pagers and other outreach tools.
- I'm going to pass it over to Marisa Nixon to provide an overview of the data tasks.
- Marisa Nixon (WCOA & WCODP): We set aside \$100k for technical maintenance of the Data Portal. It's been a necessity for the last few years. There's also funding to support adjustments or updates to other tools that are hosted by the data portal. The majority of the funding from the data section will go toward continued development of the West Coast Ocean Health Dashboard.
- John Hansen (WCOA): Lastly there's some funding for travel, supplies, that sort of thing and the fee for our fiscal sponsor.
- Kris Wall (NOAA): Has there been discussion amongst members of the Alliance on how the new positions are going to be hired and then all of the positions overseen or managed? As I learn about the other regions, they have various forms of management. This is new for us to have a greater number of staff. If that thought process hasn't happened, it's something we're going to need to figure out.
 - John Hansen (WCOA): We did chat briefly about this on our last Executive Committee call. I've reported to the Executive Committee but it's a new phase if we're bringing new people on board. We haven't discussed it in detail but recognize we need to lock it in. Not only for staff, but things like developing RFPs and managing the Tribal grant program. If there are models from the other ROPs that we could learn from or adapt to what we're going to be doing would be great. One of my key roles in the next few months is running those procedures through our Executive Committee and the membership. We're expecting to have people hired and under contract by December 1 when this funding comes through.
- Joe Schumacker (Quinault Indian Nation): How will the staff be coordinating with other ROPs around the nation and ocean policy staff in DC?
 - John Hansen (WCOA): There is language in the proposal referencing that – that it would be a priority of ours. We don't get into too specific level of detail. I've been talking to my counterparts in other regions about this. Those plans will emerge as this funding gets set and we learn about each other's proposals. We've talked about bringing folks from the other ROPs to the West Coast Wind Energy Summit. Those are the types of things that may emerge. I have the full intention that we will be in regular contact with the other ROPs and the federal OPC.
- John Hansen (WCOA): We have several tasks that need to be underway in the Fall to prepare for this funding – New staff recruitment, develop contract RFPs, planning for the three meetings next year, data tasks, and the rollout of the Tribal grant program. Please let me know if you are willing to help with any of these tasks. Kris, is there a date we know the funding will be disbursed by so we can work backwards from that in terms of recruitment for new positions?

- Kris Wall (NOAA): December 1 should be safe. We are doing what we can to get you the money sooner. I wouldn't expect it to go past January. I should be able to give you an answer on how it's looking by mid-September. Even if it's going to be close, like if the award is in mid-December, it'll still be dated December 1 so work can begin December 1.
- John Hansen (WCOA): We will work to get these recruitments ready and wait until the mid-September check in to put them out.

WCOA Administration: New Charter / MOUs

John Hansen (WCOA) provided an update on the WCOA Charter.

- Havin a Charter is necessary given our new level of funding and deliverables. Our West Coast RPB Charter can be a foundation. It is a big undertaking. Getting prepared for new staff and new funding is the priority but we need to determine staff management. In the initial draft Charter we included eight pages on process. That is more of an MOU-type guidance document that will allow us to lay out more procedures including how we're going to manage the hiring of staff and finalizing of contracts. I will focus on that section to move through the Executive Committee and then the membership. Eventually, every member will need to sign the Charter to be listed as a member of the group. The Charter development will go through the fall and into next year. This is also a key piece to sustain all of your positions as we go through changes of Governors, etc. We don't want to have any surprises pop up because there's a new elected official or Director in place.

Offshore Wind Update

Necy Sumait (BOEM) provided an update on offshore wind.

- Thank you for all of the comments to our proposed sale in California. The comment period for California closed on August 1st and now we're reviewing all of those comments. Next we will draft the final sale notice. We're still targeting to have a lease sale by the end of this year.
- In Oregon we're still looking through the comments we received in the end of June and figuring out next steps.
- In Washington, the last report was we still have those unsolicited lease requests. We put out a data request to the applicants and we're still waiting for information.
- John Hansen (WCOA): I'm excited about the Wind Summit. There is growing interest in how to engage and for more information so the Summit will be great.
- Patty Snow (OR DLCD): I understand there are some staff changes at BOEM. Can you update us?
 - Necy Sumait (BOEM): Whitney Hauer has moved to a different office within BOEM so we'll have a new Oregon Task Force Coordinator. That is Jean Thurston. She got us to where we are in California. Beginning in a couple weeks we selected a Renewable Energy Section Chief – Jen Miller. Some of you have met her. She's been acting for the past few months. We haven't selected our Tribal Liaison position.
 - John Hansen (WCOA): Jen Miller was able to join our last Executive Committee meeting.

West Coast Ocean Data Portal Update

Marisa Nixon (WCODP & WCOA) provided an update on WCODP activities.

- We are still forging ahead on our pilot indicators. We are entering Phase 2 with NANOOS on our OA Indicator. We're also working with Heal the Bay and SCCOOS and Woods Hole on our kelp indicator. Because we started with a ground truthing project in Point Loma, we're working on identifying a second site in Oregon to expand that analysis. We have been coordinating more with California's Ocean Protection Council because they are going to be creating a suite of California-specific indicators. We have some upcoming meetings with them where we've identified indicators we have in common.

Blue Pages Tool Update

John Hansen (WCOA) provided an update on the Blue Pages Tool.

- This is coming through funding from BOEM, so thank you to our BOEM partners, through a contract with Ecotrust. This tool will be publicly available. It will be a resource for all of our members to be better coordinated.
- We are locking in how this tool is going to be built. Ecotrust is building the interface, what this is going to look like, and the functionality. I am helping on the side of getting your information inputted into the tool. We aren't at that point yet because we're trying to make it as easy as possible for you. The simple version is you'll go in for your agency or Tribe and mark your area(s) of interest and match those with the appropriate contact. Someone will be able to go into the tool, select the topic and geographic area, then get the list of contacts they need. You will get a google form to input this information. The issue that's been tricky is defining the geography of interest. Ecotrust has come up with a tool that we think will allow this to be easier for you and will translate to the database we're developing. You'll use the tool and copy the code into the google form. The Blue Pages Tool is going to be really slick. With our new funding, we'll have funds available to update the Blue Pages Tool or make changes.
- Special thanks to Casey up in Washington and Bridgette at EPA for helping me evaluate an early version of this form.

Roundtable Updates

- John Hansen (WCOA): Patty Snow up in Oregon is retiring at the end of this month and I believe this is her last Alliance call. I wanted to send my congratulations on your well-deserved retirement. You've been such a great partner on behalf of Oregon. We couldn't have done it without you. I think we're going to try to get an informal zoom happy hour send off on the books before the end of the month.
 - Patty Snow (OR DLCD): My planned first day of retirement is September 1st and the plan is to have the new person on board by then. I've been involved with this group in various iterations for the past 11 years and it's been really wonderful. I will miss you.

END CALL