



# West Coast OCEAN ALLIANCE

August 2023

Member Call

## SUMMARY

August 4, 2023

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### Attendees

**West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA) Staff:** John Hansen (WCOA Executive Director), Bri Goodwin (WCOA Project Coordinator), Margaret Corvi (WCOA Tribal Coordinator)

**West Coast Ocean Data Portal (WCODP) Staff:** Andy Lanier (OR DLCD, WCODP), Laura Bliss (WCODP Coordinator)

**State Staff:** Brittany Poirson (WA DNR), Katie Robinson-Filipp (CA State Lands Commission), Amy Vierra (CA State Lands Commission), Matthew Koller (CA State Lands Commission), Lisa Phipps (OR DLCD)

**Tribal Members/Staff:** Andrea Sumerau (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians), Sheryn Olson (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), Mark Healy (Coquille Indian Tribe), Elaine Harvey (Yakama Nation & CRITFC), Louise J. Miranda Ramirez (Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation), Jennifer Hagen (Quileute Tribe), Jiaming Yang (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), Garrett Gray (CTCLUSI), Jenna Rolf (Makah Tribe), Rosie Gradoville (Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission), Sheri Olney-Ray (Yakima), Joe Schumacker (Quinault)

**Federal Staff:** Kris Wall (NOAA), Jessica Curran (Navy), Yvonne Fish (BIA), Stef Stavrakas (USFWS), J Lilah Ise (NOAA), Necy Sumait (BOEM), Lt Liesl Olson (USCG), Maggie Dour (Navy), Sara Guiltinan (BSEE), Natalie Dayal (BOEM), Juliette Chausson (EPA), Becky Smyth (NOAA), Lalena Amiotte (NOAA NMFS), Dana Goodson (Udall Foundation), Irina Irvine (NPS), Andrew Leising (NOAA), Adam Melerski (Space Force), Bronia Ashford (BSEE)

**Consultants and Guests:** Sara Shen (Strategic Earth Consulting), Noelia Aponte-Silva (Strategic Earth Consulting)

## CALL SUMMARY

### **Introductions**

*John Hansen (WCOA) invited new folks joining the call to verbally introduce themselves while others used the chat to introduce themselves.*

Laura Bliss (WCOA/WCODP): I'm the West Coast Ocean Data Portal Project Coordinator and you'll hear from me a little bit later today.

Sara Guiltinan (BSEE): I'm not new to the Alliance, but I have a new position. I was with BOEM previously in the Pacific region, and now I'm in my third week at the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, or BSEE. It's a sister bureau to BOEM, also working in the offshore environment, ensuring safety and compliance for energy and mineral activities. I'm in a new position for the Bureau, Pacific Regional Tribal Liaison.

Natalie Dayal (BOEM): I'm essentially stepping in behind Sara for the BOEM Pacific region right now. I'm supporting the Renewable Energy section in the Pacific region for BOEM.

Juliette Chausson (EPA): I'm in the EPA Region 9 in our Wetlands and Oceans section out here in California, and I'm really excited to be a newish member of the West Decision Alliance.

Lalena Amoitte (NOAA): I just started with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service as the West Coast Region Tribal Relations Coordinator.

- Jennifer Hagen (Quileute Tribe): Can you tell us a little bit about what the role of the Tribal Coordinator in the context of the Alliance, the Tribal Caucus, and then just in general for the region?
  - Lalena Amoitte (NOAA): I'm not sure I can answer that today. I'm really fresh in this position and have just started scratching the surface of offshore wind issues. I think of myself as a facilitator and that if our tribal nations are needing to communicate with higher level leadership at NOAA. I think a bigger piece is ensuring that we have proper documentation as to as the requests are coming in that I'm making sure that that's all noted and facilitated. I'm trying to be as big of a sponge as I can so that I can make recommendations back as to how best to plug in.

### **WCOA Strategic Planning**

*Noelia (Strategic Earth) and the Strategic Earth team discussed the WCOA strategic planning efforts.*

Hello, we are Strategic Earth. We are excited to be here and appreciate the opportunity to connect with and learn from you. Our team is supporting WCOA in gathering information and guiding the development of a five-year strategic plan. My name is Noelia and I'm an Associate at Strategic Earth. Other members of our team include Kelly Sayce, Rachelle Fisher, Teresa Romero, Scarlett Schroeder and my colleague here with me SARA. You will likely interact with the rest of the team at some point in time in the strategic planning process.

Our hope is that the strategic planning process can be very much led by the WCOA membership and Tribal Caucus so it is inclusive and reflects your collective vision. To make this possible, we are inviting you to engage and speak up to share your perspective during these calls.

Before we dive into discussion, we ask that you all respect a few meeting agreements so we can have a productive conversation and have folks feel comfortable really participating. Please respect these meeting agreements:

- Be present
- Stay on task
- Listen actively and with respect
- Speak from your heart and own experience
- Participate to the fullest of your ability
- Create a brave space

Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): Our hope and dream is not to have us come and present and talk a lot. It would be much more valuable for us to gain information by hearing from you all. What we will do is walk us through some questions and hear from you. So the first question that we've got here is what is your desired work? Goal for the WCOA membership in the strategic planning process. What would you like your role to be? How do you envision yourself playing a role in developing the strategic plan?

- Kris Wall (NOAA): I'm reflecting on the fact that with the infrequency of which the full membership group meets, a bit more of an introduction of our strategic planning process and why we're doing it might be helpful.
- John Hansen (WCOA): The hope is that you as members representing tribal state federal entities that make up effectively our membership will really drive kind of what you see as the need of a group like ours. You know, where's the niche that we're going to fill? There are a lot of groups, state, regional, federal, tribal, otherwise. I think the question overall is how does the group want to engage? We are envisioning a planning committee of some kind – a smaller group that will be again a little bit more hands-on in the strategic planning process. We'll be a little more hands-on in terms of driving the engagement and the feedback that we get, but that also the intention is this needs to be representative of the full membership. We can't just have one federal agency or one state or one tribe or a smaller group speaking for everybody and then having to surprise you or having missed opportunities to engage you.

Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): We'll start with the WCOA mission. There is a mission and a vision of WCOA. This strategic planning process will come up with specific goals, objectives, strategies to advance that mission, partnerships... The strategic plan is going to be pretty comprehensive. We want to hear from you all about how involved you want to be or not. What is your desired role? Ideally, is the membership team leading this? Are you just wanting updates?

- Lilah Ise (NOAA): I don't have anything substantive other than it's hard for me to come to a meeting like this and wrap my head around this. For me, it's easier to react to something than to just be asked an open-ended question when I haven't thought about it. Maybe some little short surveys could be helpful to sort of get it going in bite-sized chunks or something.

- Jennifer Hagen (Quileute Tribe): I'm thinking the question would make more sense to me if we were asking what is the role of the Alliance and not of individuals. So that's where I'm stuck right now.
  - Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): The role of the Alliance in this moment is to lead a strategic planning effort where you are defining the role of WCOA in the broader west coast space of coordinating and managing how Tribal, federal, and state governments advance ocean resource management and planning efforts. We will define in a strategic plan, with all of your help, what WCOA's niches are, what their specific strengths are, and what specific role you think the Alliance can play based on how you've operated. It's what's working well and where you may want to pivot into the future.
- Sheryn Olson (CRITFC): I feel for you because we recently started a strategic planning process and our member Tribes were somewhat quiet. They all do other things. Very few people in the group are dedicated to this so they saw their roles as commenting on a product once we had a product. In other words, if you come to us with even just an outline of skeleton and a strategic plan based on the mission, then we have something to comment on and we can see where we fit in with possible roles
- Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): This is the beginning of the process. It's good to get the pulse of where people are at and what people need. It seems like you have been operating in the space where you're more responsive to ideas coming forward, and then you can start a conversation based on that. And we absolutely will get to that place. So by the next meeting, I am hoping to take what I heard today to be able to come and say, okay, this is what we heard.
- Natalie Dayal (BOEM): I think in terms of engagement, like people said, it's a lot easier to respond to something. I think the surveys are a great idea. It's important to make sure that people feel safe in that space to provide written feedback if that's what we're going for. Then using these member calls to summarize that feedback, present it back to the group and say, hey, is this the right direction we're going?
- Neco Sumait (BOEM): I see your question about how do you see your role and needing to know what the organization does before that makes it hard to answer that question. Maybe it's because if you look at the Alliance as an enabler of everyone's unique mission, maybe the question is, what is your role in the ocean planning process? What do you hope to get by being a member of the Alliance? And then how do you want to participate in the Alliance? I don't know, because I don't see the alliance really like a body that is independent of all of this. It's an enabler, it's a facilitator, because it's not a regulatory body, it's not even an advisory body per se.
- John Hansen (WCOA): Then there's a question of how do you want to participate or engage in the Alliance in our ongoing work. Let's fast forward three years from now. What does that look like? Is it just that we have calls every two months? We have in-person meetings once a year? Is it something entirely different? I think these are all questions on the table that would inform where our strategic plan lands, and that's the whole point. Ultimately, I think I can be candid and say our concern as staff is we don't want to just do this with Strategic Earth in a bubble and then roll things out to you that are way off or is going to surprise you or that will have to go back to the drawing board.
- Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): There will be multiple opportunities for engagement – throughout the membership calls, the in-person meetings, informal one-on-one conversations, surveys, etc. Let us know if you want to be involved at a higher level.
- Chairwoman Ramirez (Ohlone): It's been years since we decided to participate with the Alliance. At the first meeting, we discussed desalinization and other issues. The problem is we haven't had funding and we're not a federally recognized Tribe. I think it's, how do

we participate to make a difference if we don't know what we're trying to make a difference on?

- Lisa Phipps (DLCD): I was just going to say that that was really interesting what the Chairwoman brought that up because I came into this organization looking at it as the convener and the facilitator getting all the right people into the conversation at the same time. I still feel too new, but maybe new is good. Maybe an outside looking in perspective is helpful.
- Sara Shen (Strategic Earth): Thank you for this time on the agenda. We'll follow up through regular communications and will start to include strategic planning opportunities there. If over the next month or so you start to feel an interest in playing a more forward role in the strategic plan, please reach out.

### **WCOA Project Updates**

*Bri Goodwin (WCOA) provided an update on the 2023 WCOA projects.*

**West Coast Aquaculture Inventory and Best Practices:** After a competitive RFP process, a contract offer has been made and we hope to announce the consultant soon. We will be starting an Aquaculture Working Group to advise on these projects. The Working Group will likely meet monthly. If there's a more appropriate representative from your agency, you are welcome to extend the invite to them. Please use the chat or email [staff@westcoastoceanalliance.org](mailto:staff@westcoastoceanalliance.org) to express interest.

**Communication Support:** After a competitive RFP process, Sea & Shore Solutions has been selected to provide communications support. They are starting with brand guidelines and will be working on the website, e-newsletter, and several other projects.

**Fellowship Program:** The selection panel, comprised of Sea Grant and WCOA Team members, evaluated the applicants and eight strong candidates are moving forward with initial interviews. The next phase will be host interviews in late August with a goal of making placements at the end of the month.

### **WCOA Summit Planning**

*Bri Goodwin (WCOA) provided an update on the 2023 WCOA Summits.*

**WCOA Annual Summit (October 18-20)**

- Strategic Earth Consulting will be supporting the Annual Summit.
- We are looking for more volunteers to join the Annual Summit Planning Committee. The main role will be to help form the agenda. Because the event is so soon, we will likely meet every couple of weeks.
- We anticipate the first day of the Summit being closed to members only and potentially opening the second day (the Thursday) to other participants as well.
- Attendees used a zoom poll to provide input on the content and structure of the Annual Summit.

<b>What topics are you most interested in focusing on at the Annual Summit?</b>	
<i>Topics</i>	<i>Average Response</i>
Stakeholder Outreach	Moderately Interested
Tribal Engagement	Very Interested
Aquaculture	Moderately Interested

Ocean Health Dashboard (WCOA/WCOPD project)	Very Interested
Offshore Wind	Very Interested
Data / WCOPD	Very Interested
Marine carbon dioxide removal	Very Interested
Ocean Health topics (blob, acidification, etc.)	Very Interested
West Coast Ocean Science Entity	Very Interested
Updates on WCOA projects and Fellow projects	Moderately Interested

<b>How would you most like to spend your time at the Annual Summit?</b>	
<i>Format</i>	<i>Average Response</i>
Roundtable discussions among the full membership	Moderately Interested
Caucus discussions (Tribe, State, Federal)	Moderately Interested
Networking and relationship building with WCOA members (smaller groups or one-on-one)	Moderately Interested
Hearing from external stakeholders	Slightly Interested
Sharing updates with external stakeholders	Slightly Interested
Small topical breakouts	Moderately Interested
Informational presentations	Moderately Interested

**WCOA Tribal Summit (October 16-17)**

- Margaret Corvi (WCOA Tribal Coordinator): The Tribal Summit is going to happen a couple of days before the Annual Summit at Ecotrust. This event will provide an opportunity for inter-Tribal dialogue about some of the things that will be discussed at the Annual Summit. We have a contractor selected to support the Summit but the contract has not been finalized yet.

**WCOA Offshore Wind Summit (March 2024)**

- Bri Goodwin (WCOA): We notified everyone via email, but the leadership team decided to move the offshore wind summit to give us more time for planning and to allow us to be at least partway through our strategic plan, which will help inform the WCOA role in offshore wind, which is really important for us to understand for our Summit.
- Participants completed a date poll during the meeting and found that there's an even split of availability between March 12-14 and March 19-21.
- As soon as the date is selected, we will start working on location and venues and reconvening our Summit planning committee. If you're interested in helping to shape the agenda for the Summit, please send me an email.
- We are also working with Strategic Earth on supporting the OSW Summit. We're most focused on the Annual Summit right now since that one's coming right up in October, but we'll probably be reconvening our offshore wind planning committee meetings maybe as early as the end of this month.

### **Tribal Caucus Update**

*Margaret Corvi (WCOA) provided an update on the WCOA Tribal Caucus.*

The Tribal Caucus has been meeting monthly on the second Tuesday of the month. The agenda is led by Tribal Nation staff. If you are aware of Tribal Nations that have not yet been engaged, please share my contact information or give me their contact information.

We are currently working on letters of support for the NOAA Tribal Engagement in Regional Ocean Partnership grant opportunity.

The Tribal Caucus is also engaged in planning the Tribal Summit which will be open to Tribal Nations and organizations. We have funding to support in-person attendance for up to three Tribal representatives.

*Becky Smyth (NOAA):* I just want to note that given the state of politics in D.C. and the potential around what our appropriations will or won't be in October, federal employees may be planning on going, but we may not be able to last minute if there is a federal government shutdown.

### **West Coast Ocean Data Portal Update**

*Laura Bliss (WCODP) provided an update on the West Coast Ocean Data Portal.*

The West Coast Ocean Data Portal and the Dashboard have some really exciting stuff in the queue but we're still working out timelines so I don't have any big updates. We have started hosting the West Coast Ocean Data Portal Coordination calls again. I've sent an email to people who were previously involved, but if you are interested in being added to the list send me an email.

### **West Coast Offshore Wind Update**

*Natalie Dayal (BOEM) provided an update on Offshore Wind.*

BOEM published the [Final Guidance for Submission of Offshore Wind Project Plans to Improve Permitting Efficiency](#). This information is needed for the issuance of a Notice of Intent under NEPA for Construction and Operations Plan (COP). The checklist was created to essentially increase transparency and consistency for the regulation community, Tribes, and other government partners and interested stakeholders. It also describes how BOEM will process and complete COP submissions as well as help applicants to streamline the submission process and focus on stakeholder engagement and the environmental and technical evaluation of the renewable energy projects.

The five California commercial offshore wind leases have been issued and became effective on June 1st, so that information can be found on our [BOEM California web pages](#). The lessees will be conducting survey activities such as geophysical, geotechnical, benthic habitat, and unexploded ordnance surveys in offshore wind facility areas of potential affect. Multiple survey mobilizations are common and these survey plans from lessees are required at least 90 days before survey activities commence. The survey plan submissions are expected to start in the fall of this year with surveys subsequently following in 2024. BOEM has met with the California Coastal Commission, State Lands Commission, and California lessees to discuss the development of these survey plans.

Also, the lessees are working on their communications plans, which are due within 120 days of the lease execution, so due September 29th, which includes the Native American Tribes Communications Plan, the Agency Communications Plan, and the Fisheries Communications Plan. Lastly, these lessees must submit a construction and operations plan to develop a lease for wind energy, so the COPs normally require preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Because BOEM expects COPs for multiple lessees offshore California in the next couple years or so, BOEM decided to prepare a programmatic EIS to evaluate the environmental effects of whole development on those lease areas, potential new technologies, potential avoidance, minimization, mitigation and monitoring measures that could be applied programmatically. So the notice of intent date for that is tentatively planned before the end of this calendar year.

And then looking at California offshore wind pre-lease activities for round two, BOEM continues to work with the California Energy Commission to discuss AB 525 sea space planning and collaborate on tribal and fishing outreach efforts.

Moving on to Oregon. BOEM is working with the Governor's Office on next steps for offshore wind planning offshore Oregon. As you may recall, NOAA NCOS supported the BOEM Pacific region with spatial suitability models to inform draft wind energy areas, and that draft NCOS report will be published on the BOEM website, eventually with the publication of the draft WEAS, and also the visual simulation study of hypothetical offshore wind projects as requested by several Tribes, which helps inform BOEM decision-making in the Coos Bay and Brookings call areas will also be published on the BOEM website with the publication of draft WEAS.

Delia Kelly (ODFW) via chat: Natalie can you please clarify if the PEIS is in addition to or in place of individual EISs for each of the 5 CA leases?

- Neczy Sumait (BOEM): The programmatic EIS will look at the current five lease areas. We don't know yet what the five COPs will look like so those will have their own EISes.

END CALL