



Item 4

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Ocean Protection Council  
**FROM:** Cat Kuhlman, Executive Director OPC; and Skyli McAfee, Executive Director OST and Science Advisor, OPC  
**DATE:** December 2, 2014  
**RE:** Appointment to the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT)

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

The Executive Directors of OPC and OST recommend the Council approve the following resolution:

“The Ocean Protection Council approves and appoints **Dr. Charles Striplen, Environmental Scientist, San Francisco Estuary Institute, and Ms. Briannon Fraley, Self-Governance Director, Smith River Rancheria** to the OPC Science Advisory Team for a regular three year term starting from the date of this resolution.”

**BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to AB 1056 (Leno) the OPC established a Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) consisting of respected scientists from across a range of ocean and coastal disciplines and research institutions. The mission of the OPC-SAT is to support the OPC in ensuring that the best available science informs OPC policy and funding decisions.

The California Ocean Science Trust (OST) coordinates all activities of the OPC-SAT. OST is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation dedicated to helping scientists and decision-makers work together more effectively. OST’s executive director also serves as the OPC science advisor and co-chair of the OPC-SAT. Over the course of 2014, Ocean Science Trust (OST) coordinated a public nomination process to identify experts with experience and broad understanding of tribal perspectives and interests in ocean resource management and stewardship.

The OPC-SAT have submitted the following candidates for formal confirmation by the OPC:

- Dr. Charles Striplen, Environmental Scientist, San Francisco Estuary Institute
- Ms. Briannon Fraley, Self-Governance Director, Smith River Rancheria

**Role of the OPC-SAT**

OPC-SAT members serve as liaisons to the wider scientific community for the OPC and its staff. Members must be willing to respond to the state’s needs, and provide requested information or reviews, sometimes on short notice. This means not only having the appropriate authority and availability to provide scientific and technical information within their specialty and discipline, but a proven track record of working collaboratively and constructively with people from a range of backgrounds, disciplines, and perspectives.

OPC-SAT members support the state with scientific guidance related to, but not limited to, the following areas of marine and coastal management:

- Keeping the state apprised of emerging science issues and scientific innovations;
- Assisting in describing, refining, and ranking research priorities;

- Synthesizing and translating complex scientific knowledge around issues identified by the Ocean Protection Council or its staff;
- Responding to information requests;
- Evaluating the technical merit of scientific and technical projects proposed to Ocean Protection Council;
- Suggesting outside experts to serve as peer reviewers for Ocean Protection Council proposals and projects, as well as products of other state and federal entities partnering with the Ocean Protection Council;
- Providing technical expertise and advice on and review of Ocean Protection Council project reports and literature reviews; and
- Convene and run working groups at the direction of the science advisor (Ocean Science Trust executive director) to support scientific and technical components of management issues.

#### **OPC-SAT Vacancy – 2014**

At the request of the state, in 2014 Ocean Science Trust initiated a nomination process to identify experts with experience and broad understanding of tribal perspectives and interests in ocean resource management and stewardship throughout California, and expertise in the cultural, sustenance, and ecological perspectives of tribal governments and tribal members. To identify nominees, OST worked closely with the OPC and Governor's office to conduct a public nomination process across Tribal communities in California. This included outreach via distribution lists and listservs, and personal letters mailed to each Tribal chairperson paired with individual emails to staff for all coastal Tribes in California. The nomination period remained open for 30 business days.

The response to this vacancy garnered 7 nominees from Tribal communities across California. Following the nomination period, OST contacted each nominee to confirm their interest in serving, and to gain additional, standardized background for the selection process. OST compiled all materials and engaged a selection panel including the State and independent expertise to select two highly qualified candidates:

- **Dr. Chuck Striplen, Environmental Scientist, San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI):** Dr. Striplen received a double B.A. in Biology and Environmental Studies from UC Santa Cruz in 1992, and his MS (2011) and PhD (2014) from UC Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management. He is also currently a Visiting Scholar in Anthropology at UC Berkeley. An avid student of landscape history and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), Dr. Striplen adds another layer of complexity to the SFEI's Historical Ecology Program's analysis of the physical and ecological characteristics of the region's wetlands, creeks, and terrestrial habitats prior to major Euro-American colonization. Through the use of early historical documents, oral histories, and other ethno-ecological sources, Dr. Striplen is developing a Cultural Landscapes focus area at SFEI, and contributes analyses of Native Californian resource management that shaped the landscape first encountered by European explorers.
- **Ms. Briannon Fraley, Self-Governance Director, Smith River Rancheria:** Briannon Fraley is a Tolowa Dee-ni' citizen of the Smith River Rancheria and grew up on the North Pacific Ocean in the heart of her Tribal territory on the California-Oregon border. In 2009, she received a Post Baccalaureate Degree from Humboldt State University in Native American Studies, Law and Governance. In 2012, she was selected as the Tribe's first Self-Governance Director and has

developed and directed Ocean Governance with a focus on Tribal stewardship, preservation and planning, Marine Protected Areas, and Marine Spatial Planning. In 2012, she led the efforts of North Coast Tribes to develop a research design that incorporates indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and management for her Tribe and other interested Tribes to actively engage in MPA monitoring. She has strong working relationships with California Coastal Tribes and is an advocate of incorporating traditional stewardship practices into Tribal, State and Federal processes for sustainable healthy ecosystems.