

# Taking Action to Combat Ocean Acidification on the West Coast

Jenn Phillips  
June 29 OPC Meeting



Ocean acidification (OA) is a global phenomenon; the U.S.-Canadian West Coast will face some of the earliest, most severe changes in ocean carbon chemistry.



# The West Coast Ocean Acidification & Hypoxia Science Panel



- Convened in 2013 by the Ocean Science Trust at the request of the California Ocean Protection Council
- 20 scientific experts
- Charge of Panel:
  - Advance understanding of OAH
  - Develop management options



# The Panel Published:

## 6 Major Findings

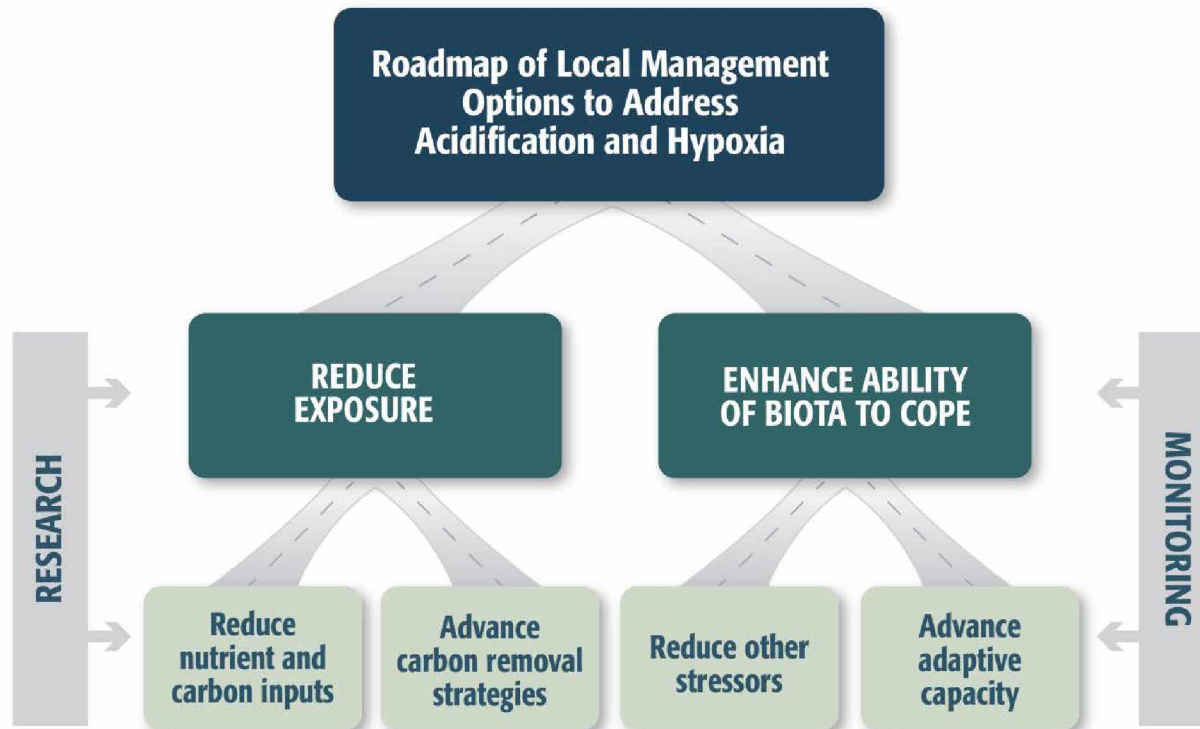
*Summarizing our State of Knowledge*

## 8 Recommendations

*What should you do about it?*

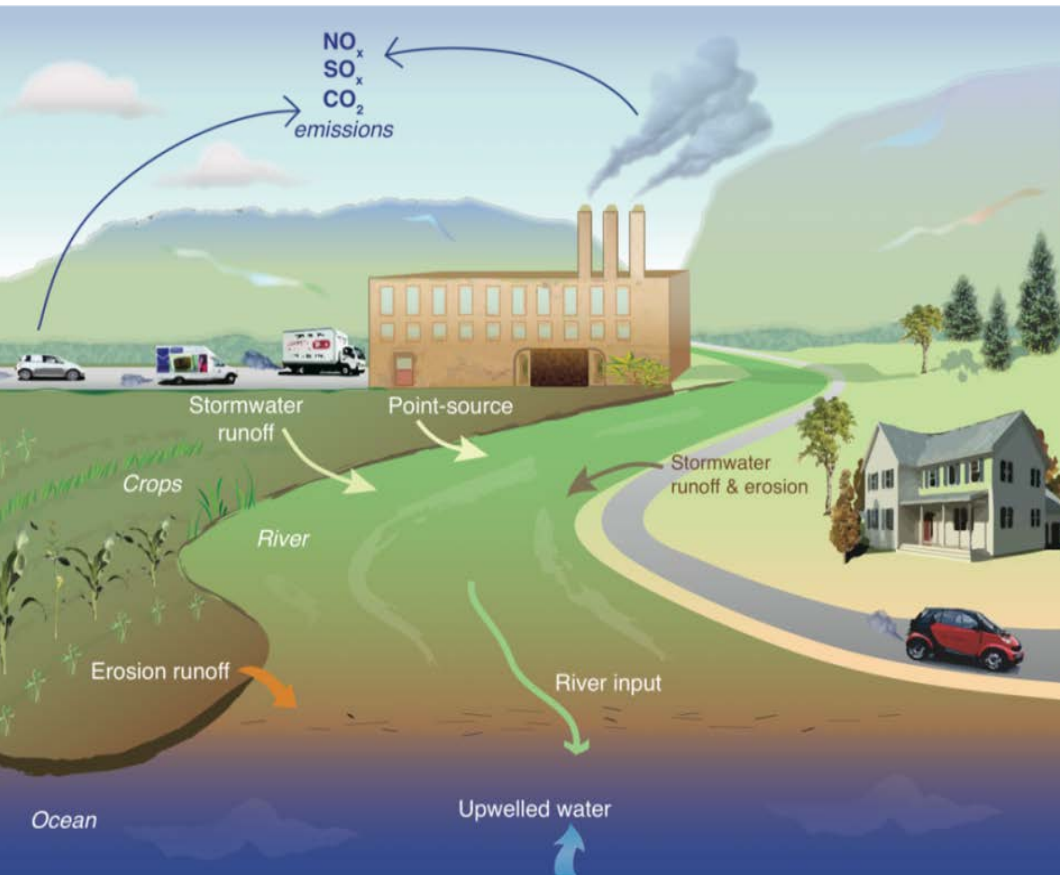
## 14 Actions

*Translating the recommendations into things you can do now*



# local pollutant inputs that exacerbate OAH

- Develop predictive models of OAH and local source contributions



*OPC and NOAA invested in a model that investigates whether an improvement in local OAH can be achieved by **curbing runoff from wastewater treatment plants and stormwater***

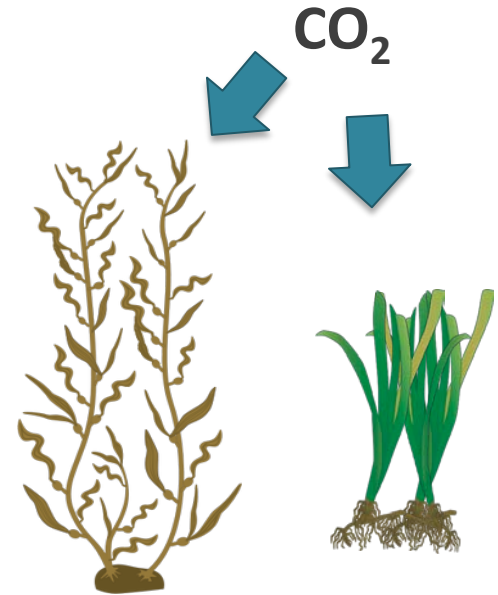
- *Can we manage local OAH by reducing nutrient runoff?*
- ***We will expand on such models.***

# Approaches that remove CO<sub>2</sub> from water

- Use projects to evaluate which vegetated locations are optimal for removing CO<sub>2</sub>

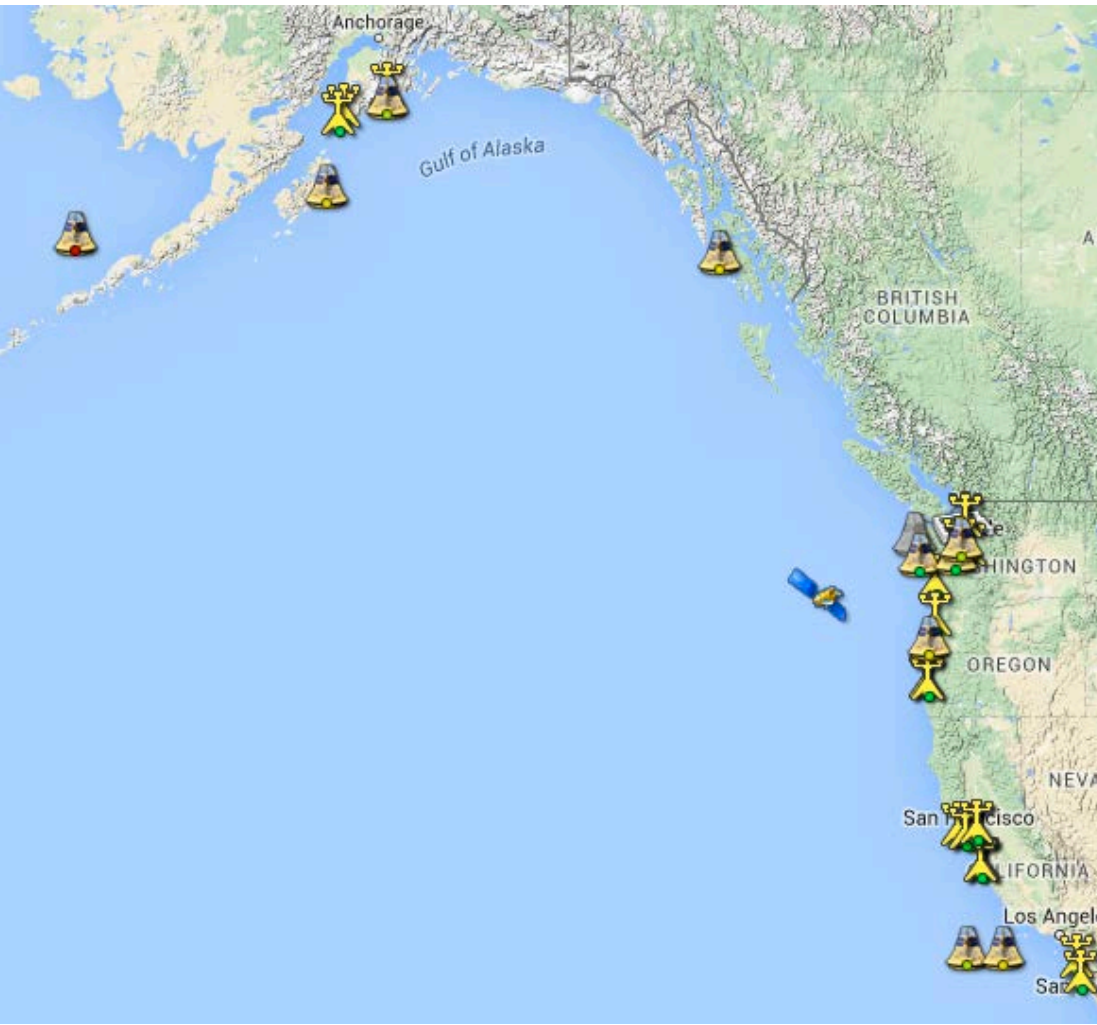
*OPC and partners are planning projects to quantify seagrasses' ability to reduce OA exposure.*

- *Projects will include different seagrass bed characteristics and locations to identify where to conserve and restore for OA benefits*
- *Understanding what affects seagrasses' ability to ameliorate OA will inform management*



# Develop a West Coast monitoring program that meets management needs

- Enhance comparability of and access to data



- *Interagency partnerships underway*
- ***We are setting up a monitoring task force to comprehensively document all OA data across the West Coast***
- *As we do this, must revise OA water quality criteria so that we measure the most appropriate OA parameters and establish thresholds for when a water body is impaired with respect to OA*

# Will continue to build upon the Panel's work, administratively and legislatively



## The Pacific Coast Collaborative

- Building regional, national and international collaboration



British Columbia



California



Oregon



Washington



## Assembly Bill 2139 (Williams)

- Asks OPC to make progress on OAH actions and bring forward next steps to the Council each year

## Senate Bill 1363 (Monning, coauthor: Pavley)

- Calls out multiple benefits of eelgrass restoration, including
- Helping to mitigate hypoxia
  - Sequestering carbon in the underlying sediments
  - Habitat and water quality benefits





- ✓ It's an **exciting** time in this nascent field and it requires we continue work together in a **thoughtful** way.
- ✓ We will be bringing a **comprehensive spending and action plan** to the next OPC meeting, and look forward to next steps.
- ✓ **Thank you.**

