Executive Director's Report – February 13, 2019

The Executive Director's Report provides an update on OPC outcomes and accomplishments since the previous OPC meeting. This report covers October 2018 – January 2019.

Funding

All funding opportunities are designed to address the priority issue areas identified in OPC's Strategic Plan.

Proposition 1 (Water Quality, Supply and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014)
OPC staff released the grant proposal solicitation for its third and last round (Round 3) of Proposition 1 funding on January 23, 2019. The deadline for applications is March 18, 2019. Approximately $10 million is available for grants during Round 3. OPC's priority issue areas for Proposition 1 funding include marine managed areas; climate change adaptation; fisheries; and water quality and marine pollution.

Proposition 84 (Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006)
At its October 2018 meeting, OPC approved projects totaling almost $7 million to support OPC priorities around ocean acidification, sea-level rise, coastal sediment management, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, marine renewable energy, and marine pollution. OPC has approximately $1 million of Proposition 84 funds remaining.

Proposition 68 (California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018)
Passed by voters in June, Proposition 68 provides a total of $56.2 million to OPC: $35 million to support projects that restore marine wildlife and healthy ocean ecosystems and an additional $21.2 million to fund projects that increase community and ecosystem resilience to climate change. In July 2018, OPC received an initial $20 million appropriation of these funds, with $10 million for marine ecosystems projects and $10 million for climate change projects. On January 7, 2019, OPC staff released the draft Prop 68 grant guidelines for public review and comment and is hosting five workshops between February 11 and 22 to present the guidelines and solicit feedback (workshop details can be accessed in the link above). Public comments on the draft guidelines are due on February 28; OPC staff anticipate bringing final grant guidelines to the Council for consideration and approval at its May 15, 2019 meeting.

Once-Through Cooling Interim Mitigation Program:
To address the damaging impacts of once-through cooling (OTC), the State Water Resources Control Board established a Policy in 2010 requiring power plants to stop using once-through cooling technology. The Policy requires power plants that are not in compliance to make mitigation payments annually based on their annual intake volume of water until they come into compliance. OPC receives up to $5.4 million annually from these mitigation payments to distribute through its OTC Interim Mitigation Program. In the Fall of 2018, OPC released a solicitation of $3.4 million for restoration projects that increase marine life associated with marine protected areas (MPAs) from San Diego to Big Sur, including the Channel Islands. The solicitation closed on February 1, 2019 and applications are now under review by a selection committee comprised of state agency representatives, restoration experts, and marine scientists. Recommended projects will be presented to the Council for consideration and approval at its May 15, 2019 meeting.

General Fund to Address Whale and Sea Turtle Entanglement in Fishing Gear:
The Budget Act of 2018 included a $7.5 million General Fund appropriation to OPC to address whale and sea turtle entanglement, with $1 million of the total amount directed to support sea lion and seal stranding rescue and rehabilitation activities. At the October 25, 2018, OPC meeting, the Council approved disbursement of $1 million to the UC Davis Wildlife Health Center to fund California Marine Mammal Stranding Network member activities for sea lion and seal rescue and rehabilitation. At that meeting, the Council also approved a $170,000 project to deploy solar loggers (solar-power vessel tracking systems) on Dungeness crab commercial fishing and whale watching vessels to collect fishing activity and whale concentration data. This information will inform the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) of the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group to reduce the risk of entanglement in fishing gear.

Additionally, in September 2018, SB 1017 (Allen) was signed into law to phase out drift gillnets in the shark and swordfish fishery. SB 1017 directs OPC to provide $1 million of the $7.5 million appropriation to fund the transition program established by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) required per SB 1017. OPC staff anticipates bringing this project to the Council for consideration and approval once CDFW has finalized its agreement with the fiscal agent who will administer the transition program.

Taking into account the above projects, OPC has approximately $5.3 million of General Fund monies remaining to address whale and sea turtle entanglement; OPC staff is currently developing an investment plan - in close coordination with CDFW, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and stakeholders - to ensure strategic and impactful deployment of the remaining funds.

Staffing

On November 26, 2018 we welcomed Whitney Berry to our staff as an Environmental Scientist in our climate change program. Prior to being hired, Whitney was a California Sea Grant Fellow in OPC's climate change program where she played an integral role in developing California's Ocean Acidification Action Plan and integrating oceans into the climate dialogue at the Global Climate

Action Summit. Whitney will continue to advance OPC's work on ocean acidification while providing support for our other climate change priorities, including sea-level rise and the intersection of climate change, marine protected areas and fisheries. Whitney has a Master's Degree in International Environmental Policy - with a concentration in Ocean and Coastal Resource Management - from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey and a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Science from San Diego State University.

On December 5, 2018 we welcomed Mike Esgro to our staff as an Environmental Scientist working on marine ecosystem health. Prior to being hired, Mike was a California Sea Grant Fellow in OPC's MPA program where he helped lead the development of OPC's MPA Long-Term Monitoring Action Plan and the state's effort to add California's MPA network to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. Mike will continue to support OPC's MPA work in addition to addressing issues related to climate change, fisheries, and kelp forest ecosystem resilience. Mike has a Master's Degree in Applied Marine and Watershed Science from CSU Monterey Bay and a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from UCLA.

Allison Kellum, Climate Change Sea Grant fellow, started with OPC in January 2019 . She earned her Masters in Advanced Studies in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where she researched stakeholder opinions of California's network of MPAs. Most recently she worked with the Net Gains Alliance to convene a workshop on electronic monitoring of fisheries. She has a broad background as a marine science educator and project manager, communicating on topics ranging from climate change to marine ecosystems. Allison will work on projects associated with sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and impacts on marine resources due to a changing climate.

Scott Shatto started with OPC in February 2019 as the MPA Sea Grant Fellow. Scott earned a Masters in Advanced Studies in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Most recently, he worked for the Waitt Foundation as their Science and Policy Fellow, focusing his work on researching ideal locations for MPA establishment in small island nations and understanding foreign government needs in doing so. At OPC, Scott will work all aspects of California's MPA Management Program including: research and monitoring, education and outreach, enforcement and compliance, and policy and permitting.

Strategic Plan Issue Area 1: Science-Based Decision-making

Science-based decision-making is integrated into all priority program areas; see below for more details.

Strategic Plan Issue Area 2: Climate Change

I. Ocean Acidification

A. International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification:

The International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (also called the Ocean Acidification Alliance, or "OA Alliance") was founded in 2016 as a result of the strong partnerships developed across the west coast to address ocean acidification, and the recognition that the challenges associated with this threat needed to be addressed at the local, state, regional, and international levels. California is a founding member of the OA Alliance.

The OA Alliance has grown considerably since that modest start, and now has over 70 members from around the world. As the OA Alliance continues to grow the need fora more diverse, formal governance body became evidentto provide strategic guidance for our goals, activities and outcomes.As a result, an OA Alliance Executive Committee was formed. The Executive Committee is comprised of representatives from New Zealand, Chile, France, Fiji, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, State of New York, City of Vancouver, California, Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. OPC serves as California's representative on the OA Alliance Executive Committee.

Other recent successes of the OA Alliance include:

- In September 2018, the OA Alliance contributed to and was featured prominently at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, hosting an affiliate event attended by more than 100 people. This event showcased national and subnational commitments to addressing ocean acidification; presented approaches for responding to the science of ocean acidification through the creation of OA Action Plans; and invited Global Climate Action Summit participants to make commitments to address ocean acidification and other changing ocean conditions within climate agreement frameworks.
- In October 2018, representatives of the OA Alliance attended the 2018 Our Ocean Conference and committed to support the development of twenty OA Action Plans in 2019 and grow the OA Alliance to 100 members.
- In December 2018, the OA Alliance hosted a formal side event at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP24 in Katowice, Poland, and participated in a number of other side events.

B. California's Ocean Acidification Action Plan:

OPC, with support from Ocean Science Trust (OST), developed California's Ocean Acidification Action Plan (Action Plan) as part of California's commitment when it joined the OA Alliance. This Action Plan was adopted at the October 2018 Council meeting and is now in the implementation phase. OPC has already held meetings to discuss priority actions and next steps for implementation of the OA Action Plan.

C. Vulnerability to Ocean Acidification:

Over the past 10 years, California has responded to the threat of OA by investing in science that can help the state anticipate, mitigate, and adapt to the significant ocean chemistry changes that will continue to proliferate and become more extreme. The State's political leaders are recognizing the need to identify and protect vulnerable locations and species in California through legislation and policy action, including California OA Action Plan, Assembly Bill 2139 (Williams, 2016), and Senate Bill 1363 (Monning, 2016). Ongoing research, monitoring, and modeling efforts are beginning to illuminate chemical, ecological, and social vulnerability to OA throughout the state. In response, and to support this critical research, the "Impacts of Ocean Acidification on California Living Marine Resources" infographic was developed in partnership with OST. This data compilation was created by synthesizing results from peer reviewed articles and through engaging scientific experts working on related projects. The species included in this infographic represent a diverse subset of species considered "ocean climate indicators," as well as species which are commercially, recreationally, and/or ecologically important.

This infographic will be accompanied by a scientific publication and is an important step in sharing what we know about valuable ocean species that may be most vulnerable to OA, as well as identifying critical knowledge gaps where the potential effects of OA are still largely unknown. Visualizing these impacts can aid state resource managers in understanding what is at stake and where to act first as the oceans acidify. While there is still much to learn, this synthesis is a critical first step in helping the state ensure resilient California ecosystems.

D. Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Task Force:

In 2017, OPC funded the Ocean Science Trust (OST) to convene and manage an Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH) Science Task Force (Task Force), in response to Assembly Bill 2139 (Williams, 2016) and recommendations of the West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel. The Task Force served its initial term from January 2018 - December 2018 and was charged with providing scientific advice to ensure that OPC decision-making and action on the issues of ocean acidification and hypoxia continue to be supported by the best available science.

During the first year, OST worked with Task Force members to develop a science roadmap to support implementation of the 2018 State of California Ocean Acidification Action Plan, managed a successful public webinar series to engage decision-makers in ongoing research and monitoring efforts, and provided ongoing science advice to OPC to guide current and future state investments.

Armed with lessons learned from the Task Force's first year and the vision articulated in the Action Plan, OPC intends to extend the Task Force term through 2020 (with the potential for extension pending state needs and available resources). Additionally, in response to AB 2139, the Task Force will develop a summary report for the Council and the California State Legislature that highlights opportunities to continue advancing ocean science to gain new insights on mitigation and

adaptation options for California and beyond. This report will be presented to the Council at the May Council meeting. More information about the Task Force can be found here.

E. Pacific Coast Collaborative and Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Monitoring Task Force:

The Ocean Protection Council represensts California on the Pacific Coast Collaborative (PCC) Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH) Working Group. The PCC includes the jurisdictions of British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California, who have agreed to work together as a region on energy, climate and ocean acidification issues, including calling for more investment in scientific research and monitoring as a region. The PCC convened the Joint Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH) Monitoring Task Force in 2016, in partnership with the federal Interagency Working Group on Ocean Acidification (IWG-OA). The purpose of this Task Force was to inventory the OAH monitoring infrastructure along the North American Pacific Coast and provide easy public access to the information.

Completed by OPC in 2018, the inventory now contains records from over 125 participants describing over 200 projects from Alaska to Baja California. The monitoring efforts included in the inventory are capturing trends in OAH occurring across the region and helping scientists and decision-makers better understand and respond to potential impacts to key specifies and ecosystems. The inventory has already been instrumental in informing management and decision-making processes.

In the fall of 2018, managers and decision-makers convened to identify information needs, while jointly conferring with monitoring experts, to conduct a gaps assessment and prioritize those gaps to inform future research and monitoring investment. The ultimate goal of the OAH monitoring inventory is to rigorously document trends in key climate and ocean acidification metrics, and to empower managers to implement adaptation and mitigation strategies. On behalf of California, OPC is currently discussing next steps for the OAH Monitoring Inventory.

II. International Ocean-Climate Leadership

California recognizes the critical role the ocean plays in moderating the earth's climate, as well as the catastrophic consequences of climate change on the health of the ocean and coastal communities. California has demonstrated strong leadership on this topic in a variety of international forums. Most recently, California participated in the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) in Katowice, Poland in December of 2018. California was represented by Governor Brown's Senior Climate Advisor, Ken Alex. Mr. Alex spoke regarding California's ocean climate action priorities at numerous events, including:

- Ocean Action Day

- From Knowledge to OA Action: Mobilizing Global Leadership to Advance OA Action Plans that Protect Coastal Communities and Livelihoods from a Changing Ocean
- Oceans Day: Marrakech Partnership: High Level Oceans Action Event
- Ocean-Climate Action: A Next Step Forward in the Global Climate Effort

At COP24, California announced its California's Ocean-Climate Contribution**,** which asserts ocean-specific actions the state is taking both to increase resilience to climate change and to mitigate anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, at the Global Climate Action Summit in September 2018, California announced the Ocean-Climate Action Agenda. For the first time at an international climate summit, global leaders from all sectors of society recognized that oceans can and must be part of the solution to combatting climate change.

Together, the Ocean-Climate Action Agenda and California's Ocean-Climate Contribution lay out a clear framework for subnational and national leaders to integrate oceans into the climate conversation. Actions like protecting seagrasses and other important ocean habitat, creating and supporting effective marine protected areas, and readying fisheries for climate change can add significantly to a government's overall mitigation and adaptation efforts to address climate change.This approach marks a sea change because it not only recognizes the ocean as an integral player in the global effort to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, but it also recognizes the importance of subnational leadership in meeting these goals. Subnationally determined contributions, like California's Ocean-Climate Contribution, can help inform a country's adaptation communications and increase their mitigation ambition through enhanced NDCs and supplementary climate goals. They also could help governments identify gaps in their ocean-climate actions and prioritize future research, initiatives, and policies.

Looking to COP25, which is scheduled to be in Chile in January of 2020 (and likely will focus on the ocean-climate connection), and the UN Ocean Conference in June of 2020, it is important, now more than ever, to encourage other national and subnational leaders to create and communicate their own ocean-climate contributions. Such contributions will demonstrate the importance and feasibility of integrating ocean and climate action—and they will inspire action around the world. More information about the importance of including oceans in climate action and subnationally determined contributions can be found here and here.

III. Sea-level Rise:

OPC is continuing its leadership in addressing the threat of sea-level rise after last year's successful adoption of the update to the State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance document. OPC staff is coordinating with state agencies and leading meetings of the Sea-Level Rise Leadership Team (which includes leadership and program staff from OPC, Coastal Commission, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, State Coastal Conservancy, State

Parks, State Lands Commission, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and the Delta Stewardship Council) to further discuss communication and implementation strategies around sea-level rise adaptation planning. In addition, OPC staff has been working with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program on updates to the Adaptation Clearinghouse website to ensure that it will include relevant sea-level rise adaptation tools and resources.

IV. Coastal Sediment Management:

OPC and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continue to co-convene a local-state-federal Coastal Sediment Management Workgroup (CSMW) on a bimonthly basis. The current focus of the workgroup is implementation of a state Sediment Master Plan (Master Plan) which was completed in early 2018. Development of the Master Plan was funded under a 50/50 cost-share agreement between the state and USACE. The Master Plan is not a single document but rather a body of work comprised of many elements including but not limited to: 15 Coastal Regional Sediment Management Plans, four Programmatic Environmental Impact Reports, and a Biological Impacts Analyses and a companion Resource Protection Guidelines. The University of Southern California Sea Grant and the Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Ocean and Nourishment (a Joint Powers Authority) is assisting the CSMW in developing a strategy for implementing the Master Plan.

At the request of the USACE, OPC staff participated in a national state-federal review panel regional sediment pilot projects in early 2018. The program was the result of the 2016 amendments to the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). In summary, projects must be innovative and address regional sediment management issues including but not limited to, coastal erosion, wetlands restoration, shoreline restoration. In November 2018, ten projects were selected from around the nation for funding, with one being in San Francisco Bay; however, the Congressional Appropriations Committee and USACE are still in discussions about an appropriate funding source within WRDA.

Closed Climate Change Grants:
UC Berkeley Climate Readiness Institute: Resources to Support Sea Level Rise Planning in California and the Adaptation Clearinghouse/Climate Change Database ($255,000).

- The Climate Readiness Institute at the University of California, Berkeley helped to develop new resources related to sea-level rise adaptation in California. This work supported the Natural Resources Agency and OPC's implementation of AB 2516, "Planning for Sea Level Rise Database." The work by UC Berkeley advanced OPC's initiatives on this topic by providing more comprehensive knowledge on the progress, status, and barriers for sea level rise planning in sub-regions as well as at the state level. All deliverables were completed and the grant closed on December 31, 2018.

Strategic Plan Issue Area 3: Sustainable Fisheries and Marine Ecosystems

I. Sustainable Fisheries

A. California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group:

The California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) continues to support thriving whale populations and a thriving and profitable Dungeness crab fishery along the West Coast. CDFW, in partnership with NMFS and OPC, convened the Working Group to tackle the challenge of reducing the risk of whale entanglements in the California Dungeness crab fishery. In October 2016, the OPC awarded $200,000 to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to support Working Group activities through July 2019, including the implementation of various collaborative projects. These projects were identified by the Working Group as priorities. OPC funds are being leveraged by additional funding that TNC has secured to support the administration of the Working Group. Additional funding secured by Working Group advisors and in-kind contributions from Working Group participants to carry out projects and inform the Working Group's goals and priorities are also underway. This document provides an overview on the Working Group.

The Working Group piloted a draft Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) during the 2017-2018 Dungeness crab fishing season in California to support the state in working with experts—agencies, fishermen, researchers, representatives from environmental organizations (NGOs), and others—to identify and assess elevated levels of entanglement risk, explore information needs, and determine the need for management options that could be recommended to CDFW. The Working Group is continuing to utilize and refine the RAMP during the current 2018-2019 Dungeness crab fishing season. The RAMP includes four priority factors—forage/ocean conditions, whale concentrations, fishing dynamics, and rate of entanglements.

The Working Group's recent Recommendations Memo from October 2018, includes an overview of updates to the RAMP for the 2018-2019 fishing season, an update on CDFW's surface gear rulemaking to minimize the risk of entanglement, and six recommendations for action by OPC, CDFW, Fish and Game Commission, the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to reduce the risk of whale entanglement. On January 11, 2019, the Working Group's Evaluation Team was convened to discuss and assess the relative risk of entanglements in advance of the January 15, 2019, Northern Management Area partial opener for Dungeness crab. The four risk factors were evaluated as a composite low, moderate or high-risk level in the central and northern management areas, for both humpback whales and blue whales. A summary from the January 11, 2019 convening is available here. On January 11, 2019, for humpback whales, the central management area (south of the Mendocino/Sonoma county line) was evaluated as "low" risk, and the northern management area (area south of Patrick's Point, Humboldt County to the Sonoma/Mendocino county line) was evaluated as "low to moderate" risk. On January 11, 2019, for blue whales, the central management area was evaluated as "low" risk of entanglement and the northern partial management opener was evaluated as "low" risk. It is

important to note that due to the partial federal government shutdown, there was limited participation from NMFS staff, and factors were evaluated based on the best available information at the time. The Working Group will convene on February 14, 2019, to re-evaluate entanglement risk and look ahead to the spring fishing season. For more information on the Working Group, please visit the Working Group's webpage. For more information on the RAMP, please visit the RAMP webpage.

On November, 26, 2018, CDFW announced its intent to apply for an incidental take permit under Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act to address protected species interactions in certain Claifornia state-managed fixed gear fisheries.

B. California Track of Fish 2.0:

On July 25, 2018, OPC approved funding to support a California track of Fish 2.0 to enhance sustainability of fisheries and fishing communities through innovation. Fish 2.0 is a global program that seeks to incubate pioneering sustainable seafood businesses through a series of trainings and workshops, helping them to grow and scale with a priority on strengthening the positive environmental and social impact of their businesses. Fish 2.0 connects investors, seafood entrepreneurs, industry experts, public agencies and NGOs to foster collaboration, partnerships, and provide opportunities to integrate environmental and social components into seafood business investment strategies to maximize their profit and sustainability impact. The California track of Fish 2.0 has launched, and the California workshop was held on November 28-29 in San Francisco. The online competition of the California track of Fish 2.0 opened concurrently with the start of the workshop. The online competition culminates in late 2019 with the Global Innovators Forum, to be held in California. Additional details are available on the Fish 2.0 California Track homepage, as well as OPC's Fish 2.0 California track project page. Read the press release for more details regarding the announcement of the California track.

C. Dungeness Crab Task Force:

The Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) was created in 2008 to review and evaluate Dungeness crab fishery management measures and provide its recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Fish and Game Commission. DCTF membership includes seventeen commercial Dungeness crab fishermen across port complexes, as well as seven members representing sport fishing, crab processing, commercial passenger fishing vessel, nongovernmental organization interests. The DCTF also includes nonvoting representatives from CDFW and California Sea Grant. SB 1310 (McGuire, 2018) identifies OPC as the entity responsible for developing and administering the Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF). OPC is also responsible for facilitating elections for the DCTF, in coordination with CDFW and with support from an administrative team of the DCTF. SB 1310 (McGuire, 2018) outlines membership and details regarding DCTF representation. OPC and CDFW are coordinating to mail information regarding DCTF 2019 elections to the entire Dungeness crab

fishing fleet, and will also share updates on the OPC website, DCTF listserv, and OPC listserv. For more information on the DCTF, please visit the DCTF webpage.

II. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):

A. MPA Long-term Monitoring:

The MPA Monitoring Action Plan (Action Plan) was adopted by OPC and the Fish and Game Commssion in October 2018. The Action Plan identifies priority metrics, habitats, sites, and species for long-term monitoring to aid in the evaluation of the MPA Network's progress towards meeting the goals of the Marine Life Protection Act. The Action Plan is a living document and will guide data collection and analysis in preparation for the 2022 Ten-Year MPA Network Management Review. The Action Plan went through a scientific peer review process and was also reviewed by California Tribes and Tribal Governments and the general public.

In November 2018, OPC and CDFW released a $9.5 million competitive call, administered by California Sea Grant, for long-term MPA monitoring projects based on the priorities identified in the Action Plan. The call closed in December 2018 with 15 proposals submitted. Proposals are currently under review by a panel that includes scientific experts and staff from OPC and CDFW, among others. Recommended projects will be presented to the Council for consideration and approval at its May 15, 2019 meeting.

B. International Union for Conservation of Nature Green List:

California's MPA Network has been accepted as a candidate for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Green List. The IUCN Green List program is a recent initiative that aims to promote effective, equitable, and successful protected areas worldwide. Green List criteria benchmark good governance, sound design and planning, effective management, and successful conservation outcomes. These criteria have strong alignment with the goals specified in the MPA network's founding legislation, the Marine Life Protection Act. The Green List process represents a unique opportunity to bring together a diversity of stakeholders in the evaluation of California's MPA network against Green List criteria. Joining the Green List will provide formal global recognition of California's leadership in ocean management and help to ensure the durability and success into the future. This process also represents an opportunity for California to work with global innovators in marine science, management, and conservation to share lessons from California's success and ensure our adaptive management is informed by the best science available. The Expert Assessment Group for the Green List (EAGL), composed of 17 individuals with a variety of backgrounds in the MPA sector, met twice in Sacramento in summer/fall 2018 to begin the evaluation process led by IUCN and a neutral third-party evaluator. The EAGL has completed an adaptation of IUCN's Green List criteria to ensure relevance to California's MPA network. The adapted criteria will now go out for a 60-day formal consultation process with California's Tribes and Tribal Governments, to be followed by a 30-day public comment period. Details about the evaluation process can be found here and the process in on track to be

completed in 2019. California was welcomed into the international Green List community at an awards ceremony at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP 14 in Egypt in November 2018.

C. Call for Tribal Seats on MPA Statewide Leadership Team:

The MPA Statewide Leadership Team is an advisory body that promotes active and engaged communication among entities with significant authority, mandates, or interest in California's MPA Network. The Leadership Team also informs regulatory bodies such as the Fish and Game Commission. The members of the Leadership Team recognize the inherent importance of California tribes' traditional and current participation in ocean stewardship, and strongly encourage and welcome tribal engagement in the MPA Statewide Leadership Team. In 2016 and 2017, OPC reached out to the Northern and Southern Tribal Chairmen's Association, Intertribal Councils, and other tribal associations throughout the state, to help inform the development of a process for filling Regional Tribal Representative seats on the MPA Statewide Leadership Team.

Representatives were selected through a 90-day open call sent to all members of the Native American Heritage Commission contact list. In 2018, the Secretary of Natural Resources appointed three Primary Seat Regional Tribal Representatives to the MPA Statewide Leadership Team: Ms. Megan Van Pelt (North Regional Tribal Representative; Natural Resources Director for the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation), Mr. Reno Keoni Franklin (North Central Regional Tribal Representative; Chairman Emeritus, Kashia Pomo Tribe), and Ms. Roberta Reyes Cordero (South Regional Tribal Representative; Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation). In partnership with California's tribes and tribal Governments, the MPA Statewide Leadership Team is now re-opening the call for nominations to fill the vacant Central Coast Primary Representative seat and the four vacant Alternate Representative seats. More information, including roles and responsibilities of the Tribal Representatives as well as application instructions, can be found here. Applications are due by February 28, 2019.

D. Closed MPA Grants:

MPA Signs Round II: In January 2019, the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation completed all deliverables for a $350,000 grant to design, fabricate, and install interpretive and regulatory MPA signs at priority locations on the California coast. 86 interpretive panels and 98 regulatory signs were installed statewide as a result of this grant.

Strategic Plan Issue Area 4: Coastal and Ocean Impacts from Land-Based Sources

I. Marine Pollution:

A. Ocean Litter Strategy Implementation:

In April 2018, OPC adopted the California Ocean Litter Prevention Strategy (Strategy). The Strategy lays out OPC priorities to address ocean litter over the next six years, and includes stakeholder goals, strategies, and actions to address ocean litter. OPC developed the Strategy in partnership with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Marine Debris Program (NOAA). In December 2018, staff from OPC and NOAA co-led the first Strategy implementation webinar. The webinar covered stakeholders' progress on action items, and OPC and NOAA staff provided an initial newsletter to stakeholders summarizing the scoping progress, agency actions, and other relevant information related to Strategy implementation. The next webinar is scheduled for June 2019 and will involve progress reporting on actions underway.

B. Select Committee Hearing:

In October 2018, OPC staff participated in a joint select committee hearing with the Select Committee on Coastal Protection and Access to Natural Resources and the Select Committee on Waste Reduction and Recycling in the 21st Century. The hearing addressed the effects of plastic pollution on the California coast. OPC staff discussed the costs plastic pollution imposes on local communities, the recently adopted California Ocean Litter Prevention Strategy, and the Strategy's recommended approach to addressing plastic pollution.

C. Competitive Prop 84 Grants:

In October 2018, the Council approved funding, through its Prop 84 competitive program, for several projects focused on addressing marine pollution that will: quantify the role of groundwater in transporting and transforming nutrients in California estuaries; increase our understanding of how water quality conditions, including nutrient availability, temperature, and carbonate chemistry, affects the growth and toxicity of Pseudo-nitzschia blooms (a common harmful algal bloom species in California); advance portable detection capabilities for harmful algal bloom species; and identify the interaction between microplastics and pathogen pollutants in marine ecosystems and shellfish aquaculture.

D. Updating Monitoring Recommendations for Emerging Contaminents in Coastal Waters:

In July of 2018, OPC approved funding to convene an expert panel to provide the state with updated recommendations for monitoring emerging contaminents in coastal waters. Since the project was approved, OPC staff has held multiple interagency and interested stakeholder meetings to further refine the management questions that will provide a foundation for the scope

of work of this expert panel. Staff anticipates finalizing the grant agreement for this project in the next month.

E. Public Workshops:

1. Microplastics Workshop

OPC staff will participate in a microplastics workshop at the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) to discuss the need for standardized methodologies to measure microplastics in state waters. The workshop will be held on April 4-5; the agenda is currently under development but will be posted on SCCWRP's website when available.

2. Legislative Briefing on Marine Plastics

OPC staff will provide opening remarks at a a legislative briefing hosted by the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee regarding marine plastics on March 20, 2019. The agenda is currently under development.

Strategic Plan Issue Area 5: Existing and Emerging Ocean Uses

I. Marine Renewable Energy:

At the request of Governor Brown in May 2016, the Director of the federal Bureau Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) established a BOEM-California Task Force to facilitate education, coordination and consultation on leasing and permitting for, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of, renewable energy projects located on the California Outer Continental Shelf (California OCS). OPC staff assisted the Governor's office and BOEM staff in organizing the kick-off meeting for the Task Force, which was held in Sacramento in October 2016.

A second Task Force meeting was held in September 2018. The major outcome of this meeting was BOEM's announcement of draft "Call Areas" for offshore wind leasing on the Central and North Coasts. Basically, "Call Areas" are a preliminary identification of suitable areas for offshore wind development and do not incorporate formal environmental review. On October 19th, BOEM published in the federal register a "Call for Information and Nominations" (Call) which includes three "Call Areas" on the California OCS. The comment period was open for 100 days and closed on January 28, 2019. The California Energy Commission (CEC) and the California Public Utilities Commission at the direction of the Governor's office submitted a state comment letter. OPC staff provided technical content and review of the letter.

In response to the Call, BOEM received 116 comments on a wide range of topics and issues and several nominations of interest from offshore wind developers interested in potential leasing in all

three Call Areas. These comments can be viewed on-line here. According to BOEM officials, the nominations will be posted to the BOEM Website at a date yet to be determined.

Between the two Task Force meetings, OPC staff spent considerable time assisting CEC and BOEM with outreach to stakeholders (e.g., tribes, fishermen, the public, NGOs, academia) on the North and Central Coasts. In particular, OPC has taken the lead on outreach to commercial fisherman with a current focus on the North Coast. This geographic focus reflects the Redwood Coast Energy Authority's announcement in March 2018 that it had assembled a consortium for the purposes of developing a small-scale wind farm off the Humboldt County coast. OPC staff have also assisted the CEC and BOEM in locating relevant data sets for the offshore wind planning process that is being conducted at the request of the Task Force.

At the October 25th, 2018 OPC meeting in Santa Cruz, the Council approved a grant to the Humboldt State University's Schatz Energy Research Center for an in-depth study and analysis of the electrical, environmental, coastal infrastructure, stakeholder, and policy issues and needs associated with offshore wind development in the Humboldt region. The majority of the work products from this grant will be available 12 months now; i.e., prior to a BOEM lease sale off the Humboldt coast. In addition, OPC recently funded two marine renewable energy research projects selected through a competitive Proposition 84 solicitation conducted by the University of Southern California Sea Grant Program.

Last, every two months, OPC staff convenes a state Marine Renewable Energy Work Group to share information on proposed marine renewable energy (MRE) projects in California and MRE technology and to coordinate on regulatory issues affecting MRE development.

II. Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Development:

In early 2018, the Department of Interior's (DOI) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management released its Draft Proposed 2019-2024 Five-Year Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (Draft Proposed Program). For the first time in over 30 years, a Draft Proposed Program proposes oil and gas lease sales in all three California Outer Continental Shelf planning areas. In March 2018, OPC coordinated and submitted to the federal register a state response to the BOEM announcement. OPC expects the Department of Interior to soon release the next iteration of the Draft Proposed Program (i.e., the Proposed Program) and a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Stakeholders will have 90 days to respond to the Proposed Program. It is anticipated that if California is included in the Proposed Program, DOI will hold at least one public hearing in California in 2019.

Three times a year in collaboration with the State Lands Commission, BOEM and the federal Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, OPC convenes an Interagency Decommissioning Work Group (IDWG). The mission of the IDWG is to share the latest information on technology and science affecting decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure on the California OCS, to coordinate

on decommissioning projects that are underway, and to plan for decommissioning projects that are in their infancy. OPC is taking the lead in planning for a IDWG-sponsored OCS oil and gas decommissioning symposium to be held the fall of 2019. The symposium will cover issues and topics ranging from the latest on the engineering challenges around removing infrastructure installed in deep waters to scientific research about the marine life living on platforms. The symposium will be open to the public and include experts from government, academia, and industry from around the world.