

TO: Ocean Protection Council members

cc: Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

Office of the State Controller

FROM: Eileen Boken,  
State and Federal Legislative Liaison

Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods\*

\* For identification purposes only.

**Subject: Written submission for Ocean Protection Council meeting on September 10, 2024  
agenda item #11 Public Comment for Non-Agenda Items**

RE: Offshore desalination (desal)

In the same way that California is exploring the possibility of offshore wind to generate electricity, I would urge the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) to explore the possibility of offshore desal.

Onshore desal is expensive as it uses substantial amounts of electricity to power the desal process.

However, offshore desal uses wave action to power the desal process.

It's unclear if offshore desal could also be used as a wave break to reduce coastal erosion such as erosion off San Francisco's Oceanside Treatment Facility.

It's also unclear if offshore desal facilities could be used as artificial reefs.

Artificial reefs are the subject of OPC's agenda item #8.

And finally, although it's been confirmed that there could be dual use between onshore desal and San Francisco's dedicated Emergency Firefighting Water System aka AWSS, it's unclear if this dual use would be feasible for offshore desal and AWSS.

I would urge the OPC to fund a pilot project for dual use offshore desal in combination with onshore dedicated AWSS in the coast off San Francisco's Oceanside [Wastewater] Treatment Facility.



Submitted via email to: [COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov](mailto:COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov)

September 09, 2024

California Ocean Protection Council (OPC)  
Attn: Executive Director Jenn Eckerle  
715 P St., 20th Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: General Comment: Request for Pop-up Gear Update and Review of OPC's  
"Strategy for Protecting Whales and Sea Turtles & Ensuring Thriving Fisheries:  
Reducing the Risk of Entanglement in California Fishing Gear"**

Dear Deputy Secretary Eckerle and Council Members,

The Center for Biological Diversity, Earthjustice, Endangered Habitats League, Natural Resources Defense Council, Ocean Defenders Alliance, Oceana, and Resource Renewal Institute appreciate the Ocean Protection Council's (OPC) continued support of pop-up gear as a means to allow continued fishing when areas have high risk of fishing gear entanglements. Recent developments and data from the spring 2024 Experimental Fishing Permit (EFP) testing of pop-up gear in the Dungeness crab fishery are encouraging and indicate that on-demand gear is no longer a technology of the future but a viable tool that can keep fishers on the water longer without putting our state's protected marine wildlife at risk.

Last spring, 19 fishers from various Central and Northern California communities successfully harvested 229,000 pounds of Dungeness crab with pop-up gear worth an estimated \$1.6 million under the Sub Sea Sonics/Guardian Ropeless Systems EFP. The EFP participants set 23,048 traps on 2,361 gear deployments with the gear performing at a 98% reliability rate. The gear loss rate for the duration of the testing was 1.6% which is far less than the 5-10% annual gear loss rate for traditional gear estimated by fishery participants. These fishing gear trials are the most extensive and successful demonstration of pop-up fishing gear on the U.S. West Coast and provided CDFW enforcement officers with hands-on training to build familiarity with enforcing

the gear. OPC investments from earlier this year contributed to the high level of participation in this EFP.

Through ambitious goal-setting and financial investments, OPC has rightfully prioritized reducing entanglements in California fisheries. With new developments highlighting the viability of on-demand gear, we ask that OPC requests a formal update from CDFW and EFP participants on the results of the spring 2024 pop-up gear trials to be received at the Council's December 9, 2024 meeting. Including the voices of both Department staff and EFP participants will ensure that valuable perspectives and an accurate assessment of the results are presented to the Council and members of the public.

The state, fishers, and manufacturers have invested considerable amounts of time and money into the development of pop-up gear that works for California fishers, and the results of the recent testing are indicative of their commitment and hard work. California prides itself on being a leader on marine conservation and has the opportunity to lead the nation towards an entanglement-free future and thriving coastal fishing communities.

Sincerely,



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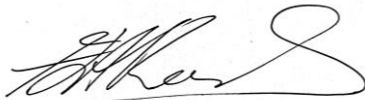
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