

SLOSEA

San Luis Obispo Science and Ecosystem Alliance

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Notes

12:00 - 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 19, 2008
Inn at Morro Bay, 60 State Park Road, Morro Bay, CA

Members Present: Rick Algert, Deborah Barker, Dan Berman, Elizabeth Clarke, Tim Duff, Nick Franco, Henriette Groot, Susan Lichtenbaum, Don Maruska, Carole Maurer, Steve McGrath, Juventino Ortiz, Christine Pattison, Henry Pontarelli, Leslie Rebik, Gary Ruggerone, John Steinbeck, Lars Tomanek, Dean Wendt, Karen Worcester

Guests Present: Michael Bell, Allison Chan, Jay Davis, Rick Hawley, Monica Hunter, Kai Lee, Mark Moline, John Penvenne, Kristin Sherwood, Rick Starr, John Stephens, Adrienne Verrilli, Peter von Langen, Mike Weber, Amy West

Members Absent: Mel de la Motte, John Field, Leslie Krinsk, Carolyn Moffatt, Marla Morrissey, Michelle Roest, Sam Ziegler

[Advisory Committee comments, questions and suggestions in italics]

Ecosystem Updates by Resource Managers:

During working lunch, resource managers reported current activity areas for their agencies. *Rick Starr indicated that he would be reporting on the new Collaborative Fisheries initiative later in the agenda. Carole Maurer reported that there has been interest in ecological solutions to the sewer issues in Los Osos. Mike Weber reported that the RLFF is working with the MLPA program, providing financial support to SLOSEA, MIG, and the Collaborative Fisheries initiative, and revising their 5-year strategy which they hope to launch by the end of the year. Gary Ruggerone indicated that the Bay Foundation is assisting with administration of the Central Coast Monitoring Program, which extends from Santa Cruz County to Santa Barbara County. Christine Pattison is working with a ROV project. Kai Lee represents the Packard Foundation, who are supporters of EBM and SLOSEA. Kristin Sherwood represents the EBM Initiatives in the Science Program of the Packard Foundation. John Steinbeck is implementing the Human Access initiative of the SLOSEA project. John Stephens is documenting the fish assemblage of Morro Bay. Peter von Langen is monitoring the dredging operations to support healthy habitats. Tim Duff is following the commercial fishing efforts. Nick Franco indicated that the State Parks are dealing with budget issues. Juventino Ortiz is working with staff to manage public access to critical areas. Karen Worcester indicated that she has received funding from their Board to work on low-impact development. Monica Hunter is working with committee groups interested in watershed management, and organizing two roundtables on Marine Policy. Allison Chan is working with the group who will be revising the visitor survey for next summer. Henry Pontarelli is now working with a consulting agency on trawler and non-trawler gear. Rick Algert is proud of a new publication on historic fisheries. Sue Lichtenbaum reported on the success of the new Harborwalk, and current work on stormdrain management (mapping & GIS).*

John Penvenne suggested AC members visit the frequently updated SLOSEA website. He also reported that the four water quality monitoring stations successfully survived the recent heavy storms and gale-force winds. Deb Barker reported receipt of \$1M in grant proposals to acquire easement properties, and a grant for Oso Flaco Lake and Creek.

Overview: SLOSEA Progress to Date:

For the benefit of several guests, and a review for regularly-attending Advisory Committee members, Dean Wendt provided a PowerPoint presentation of an overview of Ecosystem-Based Management and the history of SLOSEA. He reviewed the reasons for EBM, conceptual models of the ecosystem and impacts to the system. The successful use of a Management Action Memo was explained, as it related to the Human Access Initiative. Other SLOSEA successes include: an integrated Ecosystem Group, coordinated planning efforts, increased understanding of ecosystem dynamics, how people interact and use the ecosystem, and how to implement EBM at a local scale. Challenges for SLOSEA include: connection of small-scale EBM with larger scale efforts, ability to explicitly assess tradeoffs and cumulative impacts on the system, keeping participants engaged without formal commitment among agencies, lack of decision-making authority, and communication and outreach among policy makers, managers, scientists, and stakeholders.

Brief Update: Water Quality Initiative

Mark Moline gave a PowerPoint update, as a follow-up from his presentation to the SLOSEA Advisory Committee on December 6, 2007. An overview of the four water quality monitoring stations was given, including their design, locations, installation, data-systems, and data-coverage. Four questions were asked of the SLOSEA Advisory Committee in December. Mark addressed the answers that were given, in the areas of: (1) the most important water quality issue for an agency or organization, (2) management decisions that have the potential to be affected by our data, (3) development and linkage of data systems to facilitate management decisions, and (4) types of outreach tools that would be useful. Sample data streams and preliminary analysis were demonstrated. New bathymetry at the T-pier was shown, and its implications were discussed.

Brief Update: Bioindicators Initiative

Lars Tomanek gave a PowerPoint presentation of recent findings in the Arrow Goby as an indicator species. Preliminary histology indicates that all female gobies had tumors caused by contaminants in Morro Bay. Nonylphenol ethoxylates were discussed. More study is needed in this area. Oysters will also be tested.

New Initiative: Collaborative Fisheries

Dean Wendt gave an overview of the SLOSEA Collaborative Fisheries Initiative. Reasons for using a collaborative approach were illustrated, and an update of early efforts and results. A long-term goal was listed as: State-wide protocols for stock assessment and MPA monitoring utilizing fishermen knowledge and fishing expertise. A sampling summary of 2007 was shown.

Rick Starr explained the comparison of various sampling methods. He also gave an overview of data to date. The stratified random surveys used: (1) fishermen's knowledge to determine where to fish, (2) volunteer fishermen's skills to catch fish, (3) scientist's skills to design statistically sound study, and (4) scientist and fishermen's skills to interpret data.

Sources and amounts of future funding were discussed. Continuation of the study was encouraged, since stock assessment authors look for at least five years of data.

SLOSEA Science In Action: Economic Indicators Initiative

A PowerPoint presentation was viewed by attendees, while Linwood Pendleton gave the presentation remotely. He reviewed the project goals, which included establishment of a baseline of marine uses, identification of change in use, and potential causes of change. The survey development and sampling strategy was explained. Some data remains to be collected.

In addition to the paper survey, an on-line interactive survey was developed. This tool was designed to help the uses explore their own ideas about change in the Morro Bay community. *Questions were asked about additional factors to add to a future survey. A suggestion was made to have survey kiosks available at the Harbor Office and Museum.*

Next Steps: EBM at a Regional Scope – “Building a Regional Stewardship Council”

Don Maruska led a PowerPoint presentation and discussion on the possibilities of a building a regional stewardship council. He indicated that the necessary components are currently present, and itemized additional elements that would contribute to its success. The proposed scope would extend from Ano Nuevo to Point Conception. *Questions were asked about overlap with marine sanctuaries and other regulatory agencies. Councils are not regulatory agencies; they generate recommendations to other agencies. Local solutions warrant local funding. The current political climate indicates a receptivity to deal with coastal initiatives. A survey of the political climate should also analyze potential conflicts as well as partnerships. The varied views of EBM make it difficult to determine its applicability to a stewardship council. Concern was expressed regarding the potential overstraining of our resources. Resource managers manage their own area, but continually survey the surrounding area – perhaps we should just focus on managing our own area well? From a funder’s perspective, this geographic area makes sense. Since a mission has been defined, the goals and objectives need to be defined too. Concern was expressed that there were no local fishermen at the table. How to deal with gaps between the sanctuaries was briefly mentioned.*

Words of the Day:

Mind boggling, accomplishment, concilliance, technical difficulties, Nonylphenol, update, interesting, data, possibilities, inspiring, ambitious, thankful, MPAs, depressing, management decision trails, bold, think big, synergy, natural growth, neighbors, challenging, big fish in little pond, not fearless, on time

Future Meeting Dates for 2008:

Second Quarter: Thursday, June 5
Third Quarter: Thursday, September 4
Fourth Quarter: Thursday, December 4