

Oregon Nearshore Research Task Force
March 29-30, 2010
Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, Charleston, Oregon

TF Members: Sybil Ackerman, Laura Anderson, Bob Bailey, Caren Braby, Stephen Brandt, Leesa Cobb, Gus Gates, Onno Husing (absent on day 2), Jeff Kroft, Mike Lane, Gil Sylvia, Terry Thompson (absent), Frank Warrens, Craig Young

Federal non-voting members: Roy Lowe (absent), Cathy Tortorici (federal, by phone)

Staff: Jenna Borberg, Julie Risien, and Andy Lanier

Other Participants: Representative Roblan

An expanded summary of issues decided and action items can be found below under the detailed summary of the meeting.

Summary of Issues Decided/Positions Taken

1. The Task Force (TF) approved the February Meeting minutes.
2. Committees :
 - a. Funding and Institutional Framework Committees – It was decided that the TF will move forward in writing RFP’s and hiring consultants to assist the Task Force on these issues.
 - b. Community Engagement Committee (members: Leesa, Terry, Gil, Gus, and Julie) - The Community Outreach Committee has been renamed the Community Engagement Committee. It was decided that they will no longer be conducting a series of outreach meetings as decided in prior meetings, rather, their focus will now be on coming up with recommendations of how to engage communities, and considering the strengths and weaknesses of other models.
3. Future Meetings:
 - a. May 4th meeting will be held at the Columbia River Maritime Museum in Astoria, 8am – 5pm.
 - b. June 10-11 meeting may be changed (depending which dates in June allow for the highest TF member attendance) and will be held in Corvallis. Day 1: 10am-5pm, Day 2: 8am-3pm.
 - c. July 22-23 meeting will be held in Portland. Day 1: 10am-5pm, Day 2: 8am-3pm.

Summary of Action Items

1. Contracting Plan: (1) Steve will work on revising the RFPs that the Finance and Institutional Framework Committees drafted, (2) The Operations Team, Laura, Bob, Craig, and Frank will review the RFPs, and (3) this same group will review applicants and decide on consultants to hire (*Operations Team, Laura, Bob, Craig and Frank*).
 - a. A concern was brought up about potential conflict of interest from any of the consultants, and it was noted that OPAC has a conflict of interest document that would be worth locating.

- b. Additionally, it was decided that any member of the selection committee should reclude themselves if there is a conflict of interest and an applicant has a formal relationship with the committee member.
- 2. Final Report Drafting
 - a. Institutional Framework Committee – TF members will email Bob follow up thoughts on the elements that he posted, and he will draft something for the remainder of the committee to review, and bring it to the May TF meeting (*Bob*). The May meeting will be largely focused on discussing specific example(s) of an institutional arrangement so that more detailed evaluations of strengths and weaknesses can be accomplished.
 - b. Data Committee – Draft text for a data management strategy (*Caren*).
- 3. The Data Committee recommends that TF members sign up for and watch a MarineMap webinar on May 3rd by Ecotrust. The webinar information can be found at the following link: www.ebmtools.org
- 4. Presentations for future meetings:
 - a. Invite Massachusetts to present to the TF by phone at the May meeting (*Bob*).
 - b. Heather Reiff (contractor to the TF) will present on the four guiding documents listed in the NRTF bill at the May meeting.
 - c. Invite someone to present on MarineMap at the June meeting if the TF decides it will be useful.

Detailed Summary of Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10:15am by Chair, Stephen Brandt

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

The Task Force (TF) voted to approve the draft February meeting minutes.

Phone Presentation on the California Ocean Science Trust and Ocean Protection Council

(Powerpoint presentation available on the NRTF website, and they encouraged the TF to view their Annual Report on their website)

Amber Mace and Skyli McAfee presented on the establishment and organization goals of the California Ocean Science Trust (OST) and Ocean Protection Council (OPC).

OST

Background on OST

Passage of the California Ocean Resources Stewardship Act (CORSA; 501c3 established) established the OST, a 10 member board of trustees appointed for experience and expertise in thinking about science *and* policy.

Funding

The OST can receive funds from multiple sources – private, state and federal. Funds from the three sources varies and has shifted over time to be more private, in part, based on funds available, and in part, based on the focus of the organization. OST allocates \$1M each year to the California Sea Grants, and the rest of the money funds projects with a scientific focus.

Organizational Goals

1. Facilitate collaboration –bringing scientists and policy makers together
2. Institutionalize the integration of best science into policy

OPC

The California Ocean Protection Act (COPA) of 2004 directs the OPC – a 7 member body. The OPC Science Advisory Team is a responsive and proactive team that responds to information requests along with other responsibilities. They are involved in identification of science needs/research priorities - broad research priorities are determined by policy decisions, but the Science Team comes up with what information is most needed for the issue areas (management questions).

Questions and answers on the presentation are included at the end of the Minutes (p13)

TF General Discussion

The question was posed - Was there anything about that framework that doesn't work for Oregon? One TF member responded that he did not hear anything that would not work for Oregon. It was also the view of some that the TF doesn't need to entirely restructure Oregon – we need a respected, independent place to put money into. An argument supporting establishment of a 501c3 for Oregon is that there are a number of limitations in giving funds directly to a state agency – currently money does not flow easily through agencies. Also, having a separate entity that is advised by scientists and stakeholders provides for an unbiased body, and it can lead to a system that is more attractive to funders.

Some TF members still think that California is piece-mealing a bit and that Oregon can do more. One TF member noted that he was expecting to hear about an organization that could accept funds and then choose how to distribute them based on their priorities, but it doesn't seem that they really isolate the research money from the funders. In response – it was noted that there is a big difference between the funders dictating the research versus them having an issue that they need more information on.

Funding Committee Presentation

Laura, Sybil, and Gil

The Funding Committee presented on a proposed two-part contract that would ideally done in mid- to late-June.

Proposed Contract

Part I would address the following questions:

1. What kinds of models are out there for financing strategies and/or structure?
2. How much money is there in terms of sources and sinks – to help with short term, mid-term, and long term goals?

Part II would consider design, management, and marketing; administrative costs; and assess social and political implications.

Contract recommendations: The contractor would provide the TF strengths and weaknesses of the various models, but the TF will determine the final recommendations for the legislature.

The Committee is estimating a cost of about \$20k for both of these parts.

Task Force Discussion

Clarifying Roles of the Various NRTF Contractors

It was noted by the TF that the contractor should communicate with Heather Reiff (current NRTF contractor) to not duplicate efforts. It was discussed that Heather's work will tell the TF what the current funding structure looks like, while the Funding Contractor will tell the TF the process of getting the money out and the strengths and weaknesses, including - why it looks the way it does, how it could look different, and what the limitations agencies operate under. The two contractors may overlap a bit. It was requested that the TF provide the contractor with the core elements that the TF identified.

Discussion Regarding Part II

It was noted that Part II is consecutive in time and will evolve based on work of other committees. Further, it was clarified by a Committee member that Part II is intended to address how much a certain strategy is going to cost. And the TF/Committee can narrow down the first couple of rounds of options and scenarios to have the contractor come up with costs for design, management, and marketing (getting public buy-in). They need to know the function of the entity before figuring out the costs.

Scientific Review Committee Presentation

Steve, Craig, Sybil, and assistance from Jenna

The Committee presented on the scientific peer review process and on the National Academy of Sciences.

Peer Review Process

(Powerpoint presentation available on the NRTF website)

Craig presented on the scientific peer review process – a process that has been around for centuries that aims to objectively review science. It is the most accepted process by the scientific community, though not without problems.

Peer Reviewer is an expert in the same field who knows and understands: The context of the work, the accepted methodology and approaches, experimental design and statistical analysis, and understands if the data supports the conclusions. A peer is not: a crony, collaborator, former student or professor, devout enemy, an expert from a different field, paid for advice.

There was some discussion about whether or not being paid causes bias, because people who volunteers are often those who already have a stake. It was noted that being paid gives a perception of bias.

Peer Review is used in two places:

1. Peer Review Scientific Publications (people involved: Researcher – Journal Editor – Peer Review)

2. Peer Review of Grant Proposals (people involved: Researcher – Funding body – Peer Review – Advisory Panel)

Criticism of the Peer Review Process: May fail to recognize truly novel ideas or concepts, may accept existing dogmas more easily than contrary results, susceptible to human failings (bias, jealousy, etc.), can't detect fraudulence because they expect honesty, and the process is slow and deliberate.

Reviewing information for management needs – something that is trusted; What kinds of things do we need a peer review process for? What information don't we trust and why not?

- Things already vetted in the scientific literature probably don't need to be re-reviewed.
- Data produced by researchers at state and federal agencies?
- Data produced, commissioned or sponsored by agenda-driven organizations
- Studies sponsored by federal agencies

TF Questions:

Question: How does the scientific community filter out people with ideologies and people with a clear agenda, e.g., Packard – clear conservation foundation without consideration for fisheries?

Answer: Everyone has access to the peer review system if they have data that is publishable.

Question: Certain things aren't appropriate for the peer review process in terms of journals (e.g., community-based science and management information) – so how could this process be applied?

Answer: The methods can be peer reviewed - so maybe the time to do it is before you start measuring things. Also, the TF may want to think about expanding the list of things that could be reviewed, e.g., prioritization of research.

National Academies

(Powerpoint presentation available on the NRTF website)

Jenna presented on the National Academies (NA) – summarizing their function in review and synthesis of existing science. Of particular relevance to the TF, the National Research Council is the operating arm of the NA, and they produce consensus studies that provide recommendations to policy makers. There are 4 stages of the process for consensus studies:

- 1) Define the study – define questions, cost, scope, committee make up and a statement of task.
- 2) Committee selection and approval – they meet several criteria including: expertise and no conflict of interest.
- 3) Study process – conduct committee meetings, information gathering, deliberate, and draft a report; this includes public input.
- 4) Report review – recruits independent reviewers/experts that review work based on several criteria.

Task Force Questions and Comments:

Question: What is the linkage between state level academies and the NAS?

Answer: They function independently; they do not necessarily use the same national model. The similarity in state and federal terminology may be misleading – the state version doesn't serve

the same functions. The Oregon Academy is very broad, they run a small meeting, but they do not seem to conduct any review or synthesis process.

It was noted that there are processes other than NAS that the TF could look at, and the TF needs to come up with criteria for what they do and do not look at. Other possibilities mentioned: IMST and the Pennsylvania model.

Data Committee Presentation

Steve, Caren, and Andy

The Committee presented on the core elements for data accessibility that the group heard at the last meeting. Handout provided.

From February meeting it was agreed that we need data products, data sharing policy, and at some point a gap analysis. Data products are needed for decision making, and one of the keys is easy access – this is often a barrier. Summary data products tend to be developed in an ad hoc way in response to specific questions and often use accessible data sets, not necessarily the best data sources or all the data sources. A coordinated data sharing policy would help address these issues. It should include expectations that data resulting from state funds are shared, and data standards should be articulated so data can more effectively be shared (including metadata to provide information beyond just the numbers and results). Data standards are currently applied differently in different organizations. The timeline of how data are shared should be articulated; there should be an expectation that sharing is prompt.

Currently there is parochial use of data in decision making, meaning we use familiar data, not necessarily all the appropriate data. It would be helpful to have some idea of the breadth of data that are available to be sure we are using the appropriate data. Inventory is different than a gap analysis which focuses on what is not there. We want to have a sense of what data IS available, where it comes from, and if it is trustworthy. We need a system for looking at data and determining if it is a good source for the question that needs to be answered. This is about data management, standards, and access, not prioritization.

Data sharing rather than database management. A centralized database is not realistic, we need to look at decentralized models. Andy has investigated some Google-like models. Let's steer away from the question of what data we should be collecting - that is beyond the scope of the TF, and can be recommended for future action. We should focus on setting up the framework for access and sharing.

There aren't any obvious contract needs. There are two concepts that could be recommendations for future work. 1) conducting an inventory that includes analysis of quality and accessibility and 2) starting the process of developing data standards. The 2nd requires that the providers of data come together and through some method determine a process that is then published and shared, it could be required for state funded research. One idea is to hold a workshop during which we could start the process. It is not clear at this time what disciplines should be involved, this may cause a need for prioritization.

A Committee member recommended that data management and data sharing be discussed in detail at the next meeting. MarineMap may become the data system of choice for spatial management decisions (wave energy was used as an example). MarineMap is open source software, which means it is inexpensive and adaptable (it is operated by Google Earth, which can cost about \$400/license).

Engaging the state's Geospatial Enterprise Office (GEO). They have reviewed and approved standards set by disciplinary groups. We would like to move GEO into the marine environment and the Committee has invited a representative from GEO to meet at DLCD on May 6th to clue them into this process. A comment was made that we still need to communicate to communities that data has to be submitted in a certain format in order to get their information used for management decisions. This is a creative time where we can establish these standards. Our challenge is to make this as flexible as possible as needs and users and technology change over time.

It was suggested that the TF invite the Massachusetts Ocean Partnership to provide some insight on these issues. This could help us establish a draft recommendation as part of this report. It was also suggested that MMS be included for federal perspective.

Actions

- It was decided that the TF would invite someone to present from the Massachusetts Coastal Management Program at the May 4 meeting (and possibly have MarineMap present in June).
- The Data Committee recommends that TF members sign up for and watch a Marine Map webinar on May 3rd by Ecotrust. The webinar information can be found at the following link: www.ebmtools.org

Community Outreach Committee Presentation

Items that came out of the February TF meeting:

1. Create a NRTF 101
2. Create a web survey to ensure broad distribution – recognizing that time is too limited to involve all communities
3. Hold community outreach meetings throughout the state – spread the word with press releases – to include inland, could be good to combine with some NRTF meeting – e.g., have the community outreach the night before the TF meeting

After the Committee presented on their proposed work, there was a long round of TF discussion about whether or not they should, in fact, move forward with the outreach plans. A major concern was that the TF would not get the participation and feedback that they are hoping to get through these meetings. It was brought up that they should really think about why they are planning to do this outreach, and it was noted that if a Bill moves forward, it will receive public input. It was discussed that maybe the TF needs to redefine this Committee to not be “outreach”. The question was posed to Rep Roblan and he agreed that we need buy in from Oregonians from the beginning because the goal is to get an organization that people believe in. However, he noted that his understanding in writing the bill does not envision doing a series of community outreach meetings in advance. Part of that is who is selected on this TF – doesn't see the TF

having time to do this. The task Force is meant to be representative. He agreed that this will be vetted with the public once a Bill is put forth.

It was suggested that TF members think about who they are supposed to be representing on this TF, and individual members can take the 101 presentation to different groups (not providing any foregone conclusions) rather than having scheduled outreach meetings. Rep Roblan agreed with this recommendation – leave it up to individual TF members to get the word out and seek input. It was noted that the TF could also state on the website that if someone would like to have a TF member come present, they will try to make that happen. And the Committee can be valuable in facilitating individuals presenting.

Decision

The *Education and Outreach Committee* will be changed to the *Engagement Committee* and their focus will be on recommendations and considering the strengths and weaknesses of other models. Additionally, the Committee will facilitate presentations by individual TF members.

Institutional Framework Committee

Bob, Craig, Sybil, Gil and Laura

The Committee presented on areas of agreement on the key elements and talked about commonalities.

Components:

- Funding mechanism – how does the state effectively use funding from a variety of sources?
- Stakeholder entity – OPAC is an existing stakeholder group with institutional momentum (OPAC or OPAC modified)
- Scientific Advisory Group – this comes into play in multiple places, CA was a good example of this (STAC is the current analog for this)
- Agencies with existing authority (e.g., DLCD for Goal 19)
- Data management/data products – some entity needs to serve as a clearinghouse for this (currently, DLCD is working on this, etc.) – needs to be a clear plan and coordination
- Education and Outreach – part of legislation and part of keeping stakeholders and community groups on board
- Research Community
- Policy Synthesis/Oversight (OPC is an example of this; and MA has a good example too) – provides oversight to the rest of the pieces

Proposed RFP:

Contract a person to help develop ideas about an institutional framework. Consultant could help evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the different components, look at other models to help inform the TF's decision making.

1. Help think things through in a systematic way, and would work with other committees.
2. Once the TF comes to a recommendation, the report of the contractor will help justify their decision (e.g., we looked at models x, y, and z and decided based on this).

Part 2 will get more honed in as questions get more specific, e.g., what peer review process should we use?

It was noted that the TF needs a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in Oregon right now.

Bringing It All Together

Discussion was opened up to the entire TF.

Policy Synthesis Group

There was discussion about the need for the TF to think about connecting people on the coast and policy makers - and it really matters who is on this synthesis group and how it is organized. This group would need long term stability so it doesn't get jerked back and forth. Currently in Oregon, there is no overarching state level policy board - government and agencies do these things on their own, but there isn't a single body that has this high level oversight. Several TF members agreed that there is a need for formalization of the policy synthesis group because they have seen first-hand a need for guidance on what the state should be doing. The TF could at least say, they [the policy synthesis group] need to get scientific advice from x and public input from y. It was agreed by most that whatever format – the deciding body should have both stakeholder and science input.

It was noted that community groups need to be involved because they are not currently represented by OPAC. The stakeholder model needs to incorporate place-based models and this could be done through a synthesis that is adaptable, scalable, checks in with communities – it is a coordinating role. It was also noted that there needs to be a way to get science advice into the system without going through the OPAC filter - there needs to be an independent body that considers both STAC and OPAC input. The TF member doesn't see a need to have STAC *and* another scientific body, but STAC could be beefed up and could report at a higher level. It was noted that there should be two-way conversation between the scientific body and the council to improve the overall policy management science. A critical question was posed to the TF - is this group leaning towards establishing a new body/governance, or better coordinating existing groups?

Regional Coordination

A question was asked about how the TF process is going to be able to interface with California, as the South Oregon coast is more ecologically connected to California than to Northern Oregon? One possibility posed was to have key California nearshore scientists on the scientific body. Another suggestion was to have people from other states on the board, *or*, give the board the charge to find the best available science and that might require going out of state. Regarding Craig's peer review presentation and general scientific advice – it was noted that it would be a great disservice to Oregon to limit our science consideration within the state.

It was suggested that the TF could coordinate with the West Coast Governors' Agreement (WCGA). With regional marine spatial planning coming – we [Oregon] are going to have to work with California and Washington and federal agencies for both science and policy. We

[Oregon] should have a robust science team on our own that is able to work with other states - particularly for the data piece.

It was suggested that the TF start writing some of this up – the TF has agreed upon core elements from the last meeting – so they can at least start writing broadly

Contracts

There was general discussion about how the Funding and Institutional contracts will fit together – a team approach or one person working on this? There was general agreement that it would be best to have two contractors, but the two would overlap a bit and would coordinate work. The finance contractor would be someone who really knows Oregon to address a number of technical questions, and the institutional framework contractor would consider it from a bigger picture. The contractors would work with the committees and the entire TF to provide strengths and weaknesses.

The institutional framework contractor would take the list that the Institutional Framework Committee came up with and provide strengths and weaknesses. It was noted that the contractor should also consider other existing funding structures such as, OST, SAIF, OWEB, OHSU, Energy Trust of Oregon, etc. A suggested revision to the institutional framework contract: include where policy decisions should be made across all of the bodies, not just having a policy body. The Finance Committee suggested a modification to the contract that they suggested on Day 1 – get rid of the terms “phase I” and “phase II” - more have it be the order they will work on.

For both contracts, it was noted that it will be a challenge to find someone who does not have a conflict of interest (e.g., that they may benefit if the TF makes a particular recommendation). It was decided that members of the selection committee should recuse themselves if they have a conflict of interest. It was also noted that OPAC has a conflict of interest document that would be worth locating.

Action:

Contracting Plan: (1) Steve will work on revising the RFPs that the Finance and Institutional Framework Committees have drafted, (2) The Operations Team, Laura, Bob, and Frank will review the RFPs, and (3) this same group will review applicants and decide on consultants to hire (*Operations Team, Laura, Bob, and Frank*).

- a. It may be worth locating OPAC’s conflict of interest document.
- b. The selection committee should recuse themselves if they have a conflict of interest.

Where to go from here?

The Operations Team shared information from a conversation with Representative Roblan - he said that the TF needs key elements down in recommendation form by August 1. However, the final edited report does not need to be complete by then. Most of the TF agreed that this means it is time to start writing. Bob offered to take the lead in expanding on the key elements that he posted to bring something back to the TF for the May meeting. The draft will include a bubble

diagram and will talk about connections. Bob requested that TF members email him follow up thoughts.

There was still some concern about the August 1 deadline, and concern about if the TF is ready to start drafting text. But a number of TF members felt comfortable drafting ideas, and then comparing these ideas to the ones that the consultants come up with. It was decided that the TF would put as much on paper as they all could agree on, and note where they still need answers - organically move forward in writing, without locking into anything.

Action:

Final Report Drafting

- Institutional Framework Committee – TF members will email Bob follow up thoughts on the elements that he posted, and he will draft something for the remainder of the committee to review, and bring it to the May TF meeting (*Bob*).
- Data Committee – Draft text for a data management strategy (*Caren*).

It was suggested that the draft of key elements and the bubble diagram with connections comprise the bulk of the May 4 meeting. It was also noted that Heather would be reporting back to the TF at the May 4 meeting, so if there are gaps that the TF wants her to investigate further, she can do that.

There was discussion about whether or not the TF should put forth a draft for public comment at some point, or if that should be left up to the legislature because they have a public process. The group also discussed how broad/general the Aug placeholder can be. With that in mind, the TF thought about their timeline and contractors. In May Heather will be reporting to the TF, and they will have some initial text drafted; in June – they will receive reports from consultants and can flesh out the details on Day 1, and talk about how this might refine what the TF has come up with so far on Day 2; and in July – they will tighten up the report and work specifically on recommendations for August.

Decision:

Schedule

The following locations and schedule were decided on for the remaining meetings:

May 4 - *Astoria* – Maritime Museum (8am – 5pm)

June – 2-day meeting – *Corvallis* (10am – 5pm on day 1, 8am – 3pm on Day 2)

- This meeting was originally schedule for June 10-11; however, it turns out that several TF members are unable to attend. Thus, it was decided that a meeting pole be sent out to the TF to try to find a better date.

July 22-23 – *Portland* (10am – 5pm on day 1, 8am – 3pm on Day 2)

- need to walk out with a document that everyone can agree to.
- would like space to break out into groups (need one big room and 3-4 breakout rooms)

Task Force 101 Presentation

Julie Risien gave a brief overview of the draft NRTF 101 presentation that she had created. The TF provided feedback and she said she would revise and make available to the TF.

Public Comment

Steve Rumrill, South Slough NERR – Regarding comment that Craig made about flexibility in OPC process – want to add personal experience from CA SG advisory group – he would comment on proposals, and found that there was not a specific agenda, it was actually quite flexible. They would build recommendations for teams – advisory council has served an important role.

Susan Allan, Our Ocean

Comment Day 1. Appreciate diligence and time of the TF. Want to add a follow up to comments from last meeting – as you look at contractor recommendations, [consider] some level of firewall between guidance of NRTF and fiscal agent responsible for giving money out. Again, encourage looking to the treasurers office or some firewall.

Comment Day 2. Although you had a pointed conversation about outreach, asks them to table the conversation – when she thinks back about the MR discussions, they felt there was a lot of information that came all at once, and didn't have a chance to comment. So, while it makes sense to table it right now, she does think they should redress it later and consider having public comment prior to putting recommendations forward. Also, encourage you to find a funding model that does not look like the California model – find the best bits of other models to find something innovative for Oregon.

OST/OPC Question and Answer:

Question: Request for more information on OPC's role in Sea Grant's RFP process

Answer: OPC inserts some pages in Sea Grant's call for proposals and then OPC gives them money to distribute. The money doesn't go into a pool of funds, rather it is more focused for one project that receives the majority of the funding and they focus on one key issue. They want to ensure research is being driven by management needs, which requires that there is a manager on the team from the beginning so applied work really is integrated. To select projects: there is a technical/scientific merit and joint resource management panel that thinks about the usefulness to management for decision making purposes.

Question: How does funding flow into OST?

Answer: There are a couple of ways. There are proposals written to private foundations (program manager or executive director writes those). State funding – essentially fee for service: the state asks OST to do a particular study, then OST writes up a work plan and cost proposal, and the state writes up a contract. OST submits monthly invoices to the state and the state holds back 10% until work is completed. Federal work is similar. This creates a challenge in cash flow for the organization. Seed money with unrestricted funds can help create a buffer.

Question: So when state asks for something, do you provide that info, or contract out?

Answer: If reviewing a project, OST can do it. But if very science related, we contract out.

Questions: How many staff are there, and do they seek their own funds?

Answer: OST has a small staff for two programs: science integration and an MPA monitoring enterprise. There are two staff members for each - for one, there is a Sea Grant fellow placed in OST. OST is in the process of hiring more support staff and they hire consultants.

Question: Did the legislature create OST as a 501c3?

Answer: The legislature did not create it, they just provided guidelines.

Question: What is your process for prioritization?

Answer: OPC created a comprehensive 5 year strategic plan that had a lot of stakeholder input and public involvement. Based on that, OPC decided on the research issue areas. The council and the OST established criteria, e.g, relevant, emerging issue, potential to make a difference, timeliness, feasibility, measurability – considered by OPC and OST.

Question: What is your financial business plan to attract funds and to use if for specific projects? How much? And have things worked as planned?

Answer: The organization has grown over the years. In 2009 - \$429k from private, \$1.2M from state, \$140k from federal. Business planning – they work with a board to think through other funding sources that are consistent with the mission, not just seek money. They think about what they are trying to accomplish, rather than trying to fit into priorities of others. The organization hasn't done as much as she would like to bring in other funds, just not enough time. There is a challenge of being a self-supporting business, but also having a service to provide to the state, and even trying to provide service West coast wide. Regarding has it worked as planned? Yes, pretty much. The bond freeze was the biggest obstacle. Made them really think about how to function without this. The position of the OST with the state allowed them to persist.

Question: Following up on budget – what is your base cost and do you have baseline funding?
Answer: We have no baseline funding, all contract based. Total revenues were \$2.2M, and expenses \$770k, supporting services \$335k.

Question: What is your take on data sharing and information management for decision makers. What is your experience with organizing multiple partners in information systems?

Answer: We are thinking a lot about that right now and struggling with it - in terms of marine spatial planning, climate change, MPAs, etc. All would be better served with access to information. OPC passed a resolution recognizing the importance of sharing data. Oregon has a fantastic portal that California has learned from.

Question: Regarding stakeholder involvement – OST had an RFP for community fisheries research organization. What is the institutional structure of that? And what is the envisioned relationship?

Answer: Pacific States Commission will house it initially to give it support structure. The first hire will be a director to help develop the mission and guiding principles. It will probably have a technical advisory body which would include representatives from fishing industry.

Question: Curious about 501c3 status and percent of funds – can tip it away from non-profit status. How do you stay balanced in terms of funds?

Answer: There hasn't been a question in terms of balance. In California, there is a balanced business group that checks this. Need to really diversify funding portfolio.

Question: As a group provides service to the state and possibly even coastwide, did you all think about interacting with scientists in Oregon?

A: We didn't think this through at the beginning, but it is important in looking forward. California and Oregon should work together more because of shared resources in the water and shared knowledge. There may be room in WCGA to partner.

Question: WCGA and monitoring coastwide – is this of interest between three states? Also, why do you think funds are coming to you for contracts from state agencies rather than them doing their own work?

Answer: Regarding monitoring – thinking about identifying questions that managers need to answer, very indicator based. Yes, could be of service West Coast wide. But states should be very clear what that information would be used for. Regarding why the state chooses OST versus doing work internally – OST is an independent organization outside of the administration and has access to renowned scientists, and has credibility as an honest broker of information. But they do work very closely with the agencies and their staff.

Question: Is state funding earmarked for specific research?

Answer: We haven't had to address that directly since funding has come mostly from OPC, not from general funds - primarily from bonds, oil, etc. Bond money isn't as flexible. But that hasn't fallen on OST since money comes from OPC.

Question: What about private funding in that regard?

Answer: It is very clear upfront that we will do work as laid out in an RFP from a peer-reviewed process, and funders don't have input into the project or the final product.

Question: Regarding an institutional framework – there are identified key areas and then put forth RFPs, but have you thought about a strategic research plan for all of California, to have a more systematic framework to really understand the nearshore environment?

Answer: The four Sea Grant programs were funded to do something like that – assessing the regional needs. If we came up with a comprehensive nearshore research plan, we would still be faced with prioritizing and allocating the limited funds that we have.

Question: Regarding use of 501c3 versus other institutional models - What do you think is the right tool? Does that best suit your needs?

Answer: We didn't full explore the ins and outs of other institutions, but likes the flexibility of 501c3 without lobbying (while 501c4 requires lobbying).

Question: Do board positions rotate?

Answer: There are two-year terms; limit is three terms so 6 total years are possible. Some positions (e.g., sec. for natural resources) have no limits.

Question: Were the two public members appointed?

A: Yes, they were selected for their ability to think strategically; they are required to take off their institutional hat, but they bring their different perspective.

Question: What is the importance of the relationship between the state (OPC) and the OST?

Answer: There is a lot of room for the OST to be of service outside it relationship to the OPC.

Question: When you listed the Science Advisory Team, there were 24 people – how does that come into play when RFPs come out to do work – are there conflicts or issue concerns?

Answer: This hasn't been an issue so far. There are expert panels for different projects, but the standing body is the advisory team who makes recommendations. They ask the advisory body to come up with RFP reviewers, and that can include themselves, but they can eliminate themselves if there is a conflict.

Question: If we want to get more directly plugged in with your work, how would we do that?

Nuts and bolts of what you are doing – do you have annual meetings, etc.?

Answer: We don't have an annual research meeting – they will be having the CA and World Oceans meeting (occurs every four years) in early September. Could be good for TF members to attend. Regarding OPC – there is an OPC listserv that announces meetings, etc.

Question: Do you seek federal input for advice, e.g., are there federal advisors?

Answer: Yes, absolutely – DOI and NOAA.

Question: How are members of Science Advisory selected?

Answer: This is documented on OST website. There was a nomination process and a selection process - looked for balance in expertise and geographic distribution. There were 110 people nominated and narrowed it down to the 24 people that were ultimately selected.