

## Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Meeting

Virtual Meeting  
October 30, 2020  
1:00-4:00 PM

**STAC members attending:** Shelby Walker, Selina Heppell, Elise Granek, Veronica Dujon, Craig Young, Jan Hodder, Gil Sylvia, Jack Barth, Bill Jaeger

**STAC members absent:**

**Other invited participants:** Cristen Don (ODFW), Tommy Swearingen (ODFW), Dave Fox (ODFW), Lindsay Aylesworth (ODFW), Haley Epperly (ODFW), Andy Lanier (DLCD), Laura Anderson (OOST)

**Meeting notes prepared by:** Megan Kleibacker(OSG)

**Information from previous meetings:**

STAC meeting notes: [April 2017](#), [October 2017](#), [March 2018](#), [June 2018](#), [November 2018](#), [March 2019](#), [August 2019](#), [November 2019](#), [March 2020](#)

General information: [Oregon Ocean Information - STAC](#)

Recording of this meeting: [https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/t/1\\_pe2lz0wz](https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/t/1_pe2lz0wz)

### Meeting Notes

#### Update on assessment funding: Oregon Ocean Science Trust

- OOST was created by the state legislature in 2014
  - After several rule changes over 7 years, OOST now has the ability to accept money and charitable donations to support state projects and efforts
  - OOST is currently assisting the state to secure funding for the marine reserves assessment
  - There was a bill in the state legislature that if passed would have supplied OOST with funding to complete the marine reserves assessment. With the session being called early, that bill was left on the table and OOST did not receive state funding.
  - Group convened and decided to stay on track with the assessment and raise funds to move forward versus posting the assessment.
  
- Total cost of the marine reserves assessment is estimated at \$150-160K
  - Packard Foundation has verbally committed to providing \$75K for this effort.
  - Foundations are spread thin with the COVID downturn and they have received several rejections.
  - Marisla Foundation - \$10K request submitted, good chance of being funded
  - Pew Charitable Trust - Pledged \$20K direct support to the project
  - Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund - \$10K request submitted
  - Smaller requests have gone into the Oregon commodity commissions as well.
  
- OOST will serve as a firewall between outside donors and the assessment process
  - This will eliminate the concern about outside influence on the assessment findings.
  
- Heppell: Are the funders asking to be listed on the RFP?

- No, none of the funders have requested this.
- Sylvia: Will there be a letter that these foundations will receive that will explicitly state how we're mitigating any perception of or presence of outside influence on the assessment?
  - No, there is no current plan for this however OOST is open to developing a letter or MOU that would serve that purpose.
  - This level of documentation may be nice to have in case there are questions from other groups on what these financial arrangements mean and what they don't mean.
- Barth: Expressed support for having a letter of some kind expressing the rules and boundaries that have been established to eliminate the perception of outside funding.
- Barth: Believes that ODFW should build the cost of the assessment into their budget.
  - Anderson: The assessment is being done on ODFW's work, therefore there could be concerns about ODFW's influence in this process if they are the funders and overseeing the assessment process.
- Granek: Is there a timeline in place and/or contingency plans in place should we not be able to raise the amount of money needed to accomplish this assessment?
  - Anderson: Not meeting the full funding goal is a possibility. If we come up a little short, do we delay moving forward until we meet the fundraising goal or do we scale back the assessment to meet the budget mark?
  - Walker: STAC determined that this was the minimum amount of work that was needed, therefore if there is a shortfall STAC will need to address that.
- Hodder: Returning to the idea of a formal letter or MOU, there needs to be a preamble that makes it very clear why we're seeking private funds for this work, because it's an unfunded mandate from the legislature.
  - Anderson: I have a lot of that verbiage already and would be happy to pass that on to STAC to use as needed.
- Young: This was a legislative mandate and the legislature really needs to step up and fund this. We're jumping through a lot of hoops to drum up external funding for this. Would the threat of a delay perhaps spur the legislature on to provide the funding needed?
  - Anderson: The responsibility should rely on the legislature. From the standpoint of reasonable expectation of success we weren't confident that we'd get the attention that we needed to get this assessment high enough on the priority list to get this funded.
  - Anderson: The public and the private sector (fishing operations) have had to make some sacrifices in order to make the marine reserves work. A delay could mean that needed modifications that may be identified in the assessment would also be delayed, further impacting those stakeholders.
- Anderson: OOST is helping to pull together the funding, but STAC is responsible for the assessment, and if STAC is not comfortable with the direction this is heading then OOST respects that.
  - Walker: We all agree that it would be optimal that the state would support this effort, but with COVID impacts, wildfire impacts, and the fact that we're losing some key champions for this effort in the legislature, we are not likely to see that funding appear anytime soon.
  - Concerns were expressed by STAC members that the lack of an assessment could be used as a reason to remove the marine reserves. If that were to happen, it should be as a result of scientific data, not from funding.

- Jaeger: There are many interest groups in the state that are under funded right now (schools, etc.) If we're able to continue this work with outside funding, we should.
- Young: Can we look at the possibility of scaling this assessment back to cut the budget and get more in line with the funding we have identified so far?
  - Barth: I would be willing to scale appropriately to stay on schedule.
  - Sylvia: Did we say that this was the minimum level of assessment needed, or did we say that we would scale down to meet the funding in hand?
  - Walker: STAC indicated that to execute the RFP as written approximately \$150K was reasonable. We can go back and look at the scope of work to see if it could be modified to meet our budget and still meet the mandate.
  - Hodder: The scope of work and the total amount of money both need to be identified before the RFP is released in Jan/Feb. Full proposals are due in April.
- Walker: Thanked Ms. Anderson for her and OOST's efforts so far. In the event that funding raising efforts fall short of the \$150K goal, STAC will need to review the scope of work and scale it so that it meets the budget and still fulfills the mandate.
  - Anderson: Feels very confident that the fundraising efforts will get us to \$100K, and feels it's reasonable that there will be at least an additional \$25K. However there is a good chance that we would still be \$20-25K shortfall. So with that, she encourages STAC to come up with \$100K options, \$125K options, and \$150K options.

**Revisit in [full draft of RFP](#)**

- Walker: Depending on our fundraising success we may have to review this RFP again soon. In the meantime, STAC reviewed the draft timeline and discussed modifications to the timeline to allow the University team more time to address comments before the report is finalized.
  - Young: Suggested including a line in the RFP that allows for more time to address comments as needed versus formally building in more in time now (that may not be needed), but doesn't object to a more formal inclusion as well.
  - Heppell: I agree that it makes sense to include as well.
  - Walker: Does anyone object to Dr. Walker finding an appropriate place in the RFP to include this information?
    - There were no objections.
  - Sylvia and Young: Suggested we be clear that the additional clarification may include via a legislative hearing, or written responses.
  - Walker: We will go ahead and make that change.
- Hodder: I noticed we included in there a mention of letters of support? Was the thinking on this that they would be letters of commitment from contributing faculty? Or community letters of support?
  - Barth: Suggests deleting any mention of letters of support, they are not necessary for this process.
- Walker: What about letters of commitment and request for the list of current and pending support?
  - Young: If a proposal were coming from a university it would already have to pass so many internal approvals, required formal letters of commitment are superfluous.
  - Heppell: Letters of commitment are not a part of the evaluation process. So, we should

either not require these letters, or we should include some mention of this in the evaluation process.

- Several STAC members weighed in on the potential benefits and/or redundancies of asking for this level of information and how those reviewing would utilize this information in their evaluation of the proposals.
  - Young: Discouraged the use of the NSF bio format, suggesting it was better to allow PIs to determine what they wanted to put forward about themselves.
  - Walker: Supports a standard structure to make sure it is easier for reviews.
- The final decision was to remove mention of letters of support and letters of commitment. This information will be collected via the bio, developed using NSF bio guidelines, with an explicit request to include current and pertinent grant information in the bio.
  
- Heppell: Will the RFP include a standard Sea Grant-like budget form?
  - Walker: Yes
  - Will there be restrictions on what the money can be used for? The RFP should include whatever the allowable expenses are, along with information about the allowable overhead.

### **ODFW Marine Reserves Program Update - Cristen Don**

#### **Staffing and budget**

- There are 5 full time staff currently on board, along with two fellows.
  - Cristen Don, Program Leader
  - Ecological Monitoring Team: 3 staff members and one fellow
  - Human Dimensions: 1 staff member and one fellow
  - Communications and Engagement Project Leader: Currently vacant.
- There have been some significant budget cuts to general fund programs. The ODFW marine reserves program is funded entirely on general funds. They have had to absorb a \$250K budget cut. As a result, they are not refilling their communications position.
- These budget cuts so far have not impacted the human dimensions or ecological work.

#### **General updates from work in 2020**

- COVID has created additional workload due to tracking and reporting on monitoring and research activities. Conducting safety assessments and new protocols to maintain
- Human Dimensions intercept surveys were cancelled due to COVID 19.
- Planned monitoring of MATE ROV and Hook and Line sinker studies that was planned for the fall was not possible to do and still meet new safety standards so the staff have shifted focus to data management and communications work.
- Many things are taking longer this year than under normal circumstances.
- You can review old newsletters on the ODFW website

#### **Looking ahead to 2021**

- Priorities in 2021 will be the ODFW synthesis report and documentation.
- Communications and outreach work
- Continued adaptations to the program related to COVID
- COVID risk is unlikely to be any different in the spring, not allowing for additional field work, therefore ODFW has already declared they will not attempt any field work and will focus on data management and analysis, reporting development, etc.
- In summer, considering the resumption of the human dimensions survey (visitor intercept work). It will be a tight timeline in order to get this information from these surveys represented in the

report on time.

- Fall, will consider hook and line sinker surveys and MATE ROV work. Very dependent on COVID safety and budget availability.

Do you need to say anything in your report about COVID impacting your ability to collect needed info?

- Yes, Cape Falcon we needed additional information that we were unable to collect with COVID shut down.

Next STAC meeting: Walk through the new ODFW Marine Reserves web app

### **OAH Council update - Jack Barth**

Walker: Can you elaborate on the multi-agency assessment and how you see that being used by the agencies?

- Barth: Asking these agencies what they would do differently and then seeing how that informs their plans for the future.

Can you elaborate on the working group doing the monitoring in Yaquina Bay

- Barth: There is some observation equipment in Yaquina Bay already, trying to get modern CO2 and DO sensors on those existing platforms in the bay.
- Groups involved include academics from OSU (Waldbusser and others), Oregon Oyster Farms, several NGOs
- Group is ready with a proposal

### **Next meeting - topics and schedule**

Walker: Likely to convene again in January to hear any updates to the amount of funding secured for the RFP and to refine the RFP as needed.

Include time at the next meeting for ODFW to present on their new website and data access.

Heppell: If we have concerns about the amount of funding that needs to be secured by our deadline, if the state puts on the RFP a maximum overhead rate, we can make up for the shortfall pretty easily.

- Walker: the \$150K figure had already assumed a reduced overhead.
- Heppell: Some state contracts do not allow any overhead.
- Walker: Yes, this is something we can keep on the table.

Barth: Requests that ODFW come share results from the papers that they're working on in natural and human dimensions.

- Aylesworth and Swearingen both confirmed they would have things to share by the next meeting time.
- Walker: The priority for the next meeting will be changes to the RFP.

Hodder: If that is the case, give us a reasonable amount of time for STAC members to review the document and come up with some good ideas in advance of the meeting.

Adjourned.