

WEST COAST GOVERNORS' AGREEMENT (WCGA) ON OCEAN HEALTH

The primary purpose of this agenda item is to provide initial information to Council Members about the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health.

In 2004, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy Report recommended a regional or ecosystem approach to ocean and coastal issues starting with improved coordination between federal and state agencies. In September 2006, the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California took up this recommendation and agreed to work initially on seven regional priorities in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem, which includes the marine areas off of Washington, Oregon, and California. These seven priorities are:

1. Ensuring clean coastal waters and beaches (water quality);
2. Protecting and restoring healthy ocean and coastal habitats (habitat);
3. Promoting the effective implementation of ecosystem-based management of our ocean and coastal resources (ecosystems);
4. Reducing adverse impacts of off-shore development (oil, wind, & wave energy);
5. Increasing ocean awareness and literacy among our citizens (education);
6. Expanding ocean and coastal scientific information, research, and monitoring (research); and
7. Fostering sustainable economic development throughout our diverse coastal communities (economic development).

An Action Plan is currently being formulated with input from public meetings in the three states. The Action Plan is expected to be released to the public in autumn 2007.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council may wish to stay apprised of the West Coast Governors' Agreement activities through briefings from NOAA Fisheries (one of three lead federal agencies identified by the President's Committee on Environmental Quality). The Council may also wish to comment on the Action Plan, when it becomes available, and specifically on those priorities which involve fisheries, fish habitat, ecosystems, off-shore development, research and monitoring priorities and needs, and economic development of coastal communities. The Council's 2006-2008 Research and Data Needs document was submitted to the Governors as part of the public comment period in July 2007.

Council Tasks:

- 1. Receive information on West Coast Governors' Agreement (WCGA) on Ocean Health.**
- 2. Provide guidance on future Council involvement and/or monitoring of the WCGA activities.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item B.2.a, Attachment 1: Draft Discussion Paper Regarding the Seven Priority Areas; Assessment of Possible Actions (March 15, 2007).

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. WCGA Report and Comments
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. Council Discussion

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08/10/07