



This is the official newsletter of the Fort Bragg chapter of the Ocean Protection Coalition. The Ocean Protection Coalition is an affiliate of the Redwood Coast Watershed Alliance. The Redwood Coast Watershed Alliance is an alliance of citizen organizations on ridges, valleys and waterways of the Mendocino Coast. The Redwood Coast Watershed Alliance is also a tax exempt, IRS-approved non profit organization.



Ten Mile River meets the Pacific Ocean just north of Fort Bragg - photo by Ed Oberweiser

North coast governments protest rush to create marine reserves

**From Adam Wagschal;
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District**

On Monday July 20, 2009 the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District (District) forwarded a letter signed by Humboldt, Mendocino and Del Norte counties and five city governments to California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Mike Chrisman. The letter asked for a delay in implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA).

Although the entities signing on to the letter agree that additional steps to conserve coastal resources are desirable, none believe that the current MLPA Initiative process has sufficient data for decision making support or the funds necessary to implement the process.

The MLPA North Coast Study Region covers more than 200 miles of coastline from the Oregon border to just north of Point Arena. City govern-

ment signers of the letter include Crescent City, Trinidad, Eureka, Fortuna and Point Arena. Other signatories are the Crescent City, Humboldt Bay and Noyo Harbor Districts, the Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District and the Trinidad Rancheria.

The letter was voted on and unanimously endorsed by boards representing each of these agencies. The letter, with authorized signatures, can be read at <http://humbolddbay.org/harbordistrict/protected-area-workgroup/>. North Coast governmental agencies all share concerns that economic impacts related to these potential closures will not be properly evaluated or considered.

Those signing the letter requesting MLPA delay are also concerned about the membership of a Blue Ribbon Task Force that would evaluate North Coast MLPA proposals and recommend their own option to the California Fish and Game Commission.

This task force is not part of the original MLPA legislation, no members are from the North Coast region and none have special knowledge or training that would give scientific weight to their opinion. The same governmental agencies signing on to the letter will continue to participate in the Harbor District's North Coast Local-Interest Marine Protected Area Work Group.

Due to the overwhelming response from these north coast local agencies, the District will be asking these agencies, and others, to consider a Memorandum of Agreement forming a "North Coast Local Agency Coastal Coordination Committee."

The Coordination Committee would coordinate responses to regional issues including, but not limited to: the State of California's MLPA; climate change and sea level rise; regional coastal sediment management; coordination of ocean observing systems; ocean energy and marine highways.

U.S Senators hear the bad news about ocean acidification

By OPC staff

Senators in Washington D.C. heard some very sobering news about the increased acidification of the Earth's oceans.

They heard from Jaques Costeau's granddaughter, Alexandra Costeau, that the runoff down the Mississippi River from farms in the midwest has caused a dead zone as large as the state of New Jersey. Costeau told the senators that few species can survive there.

She also told the senators that wetlands are disappearing extremely rapidly at the same time hurricanes are increasing in both size and frequency due to climate change. "We must start to realize that there can be no stand alone policies, especially as they relate to our water resources," said Costeau.

She told the senators that energy, transportation, infrastructure, climate change, urban development and agriculture were all interconnected.

Economies of the ocean and the coasts and the Great Lakes created more than 50 million jobs. They also are almost 60 percent of the U.S. economy.

This huge part of the U.S. economy will be drastically changed by environmental changes like rising sea temperatures, ocean acidification, and rising sea levels, the senators were told by Judith Kidlow from the National Ocean Economics Program.

The ocean economy in Washington State generates more than \$3 billion each year. Fishing vessels create 10,000 jobs. The Port of Tacoma had \$35.4 billion in total trade which created 113,000 jobs in Washington.

Kidlow said the changes will be

the most important since the arrival of the industrial age and urbanization.

These changes have already started happening. Oysters in some areas off Washington State haven't reproduced for four years. Evidence suggests that this can be



Looking north from the old haul road bike / pedestrian path - photo by Ed Oberweiser

attributed to increased ocean acidity, according to Brad Warren the overseer of the Ocean Health and acidification program of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership.

A federal study found that two thirds of blue crabs larvae died when exposed to acidity levels equal to those off the West Coast, Warren said.

He told the senators that increasing greenhouse gas emissions are adding billions of tons of carbon dioxide to the world's oceans from smokestacks and motor vehicle tailpipes.

He said that the result of this is carbonic acid which is diluting the calcium carbonate soup in ocean water. Many species, especially on the low end of the food chain, thrive on this soup. The delicate chemical balance of the oceans is critical.

Federal studies also discovered that acidity levels in the North Pacific and off Alaska are unusually higher than other ocean regions. These high acidity levels are already hurting the populations of pteropods that are an important part of the diet of salmon and other fish.

The changing ocean conditions

are challenging the survival of marine organisms such as sea fans which could produce lifesaving medicines. There are already two marine derived drugs for treating cancer and pain control that could be lost.

Senator Cantwell of Washington state suggested doubling the budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and giving it more responsibilities.

She said the key however was to pass comprehensive climate change legislation to reduce carbon emissions. Cantwell said that the protection of the world's seas is an economic and environmental imperative.

Background on ocean acidification by the Center for Biological Diversity

Oceans are the largest ecosystems on earth, the greatest source of protein for human beings and the foundation of all life. Acidification is threatening everything that depends on them, including us.

Most of the carbon dioxide we pump into the atmosphere stays there, causing the planet to warm. But 25 percent is absorbed by the ocean — causing it to become ever more acidic.

Human carbon emissions have already increased ocean acidity by 30 percent and if not soon controlled, will doom most of the world's coral reefs by 2050.

Acid eats away the shells of corals, crabs, sea stars, sea urchins, plankton and other creatures. It stops shells from forming in the first place. If we lose these animals, **the ocean's food web will unravel.**

Earlier this year, 150 of the world's top marine scientists published the Monaco Declaration, calling ocean acidification the "challenge of the century" requiring a "monumental worldwide effort."

Update on the Green Wave project

By Judith Vidaver

On May 1, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) granted a preliminary permit for the Green Wave project (17 square miles of ocean inside three miles between Point Cabrillo and Navarro).

FERC also denied the FISH Committee's motion to prepare a comprehensive plan for all the West Coast wave energy projects before issuing this (or any other) permit. On May 28, OPC filed a

Request for Rehearing with FERC asking them to reconsider their actions. We were joined in the Request for Rehearing by the City of Fort Bragg, the County of Mendocino, the Recreational Fishing Alliance, the Pacific Coast Federa-

tion of Fishermen's Associations and the Institute for Fisheries Resources and the Sierra Club Coastal Programs. June 29, was FERC's deadline for responding to our Request for

expect we will probably have further action from them in the next 30-60 days (although they have no firm deadline).

Depending on what FERC decides to do, we will want to consider whether to file a lawsuit at that point. On June 13, Green Wave filed a "Schedule of Activities" under its permit.

It doesn't say much, but does indicate that Green Wave intends to begin preparing an original FERC hydropower license application (good for up to fifty years) immediately.

It also appears (from past communications to local people from Green

Wave representatives) that they will schedule a local public meeting soon. They are apparently undeterred by PG&E's pullout from Fort Bragg due to inadequate harbor facilities at Noyo.



View from near Cabrillo Point off the Mendocino coast - photo by Ed Oberweiser

Rehearing. On June 29 FERC issued the "Order Granting Rehearing for Further Reconsideration." All this means is that FERC is granting itself an extension of time to respond to our request for rehearing. This is a routine response by FERC, and I

"Sea Change" sounds ocean acidity alarm

By Char FLum

The film "Sea Change" was shown in Fort Bragg by members of the Ocean Protection Coalition. This wonderful film was produced by the Center for Biological Diversity. The film shows that Ocean acidification is one of the greatest threats to the marine ecosystems and that it will fundamentally change our oceans.

Nearly all marine animals studied by scientists show extreme adverse reactions to ocean acidification that is caused by the huge amount of carbon dioxide being absorbed by the ocean. Ocean acidification has risen and research shows a link between it

and rising atmospheric carbon dioxide levels. Scientists say that the ocean absorbs about 22 million tons of CO₂ per day. This rise in CO₂ is responsible for impairing the marine animals' ability to build protective shells, without which they will die. Oysters are already in dire trouble. The building blocks of the food chain in the ocean are in serious decline. Without the food chain, all ocean wildlife and fish will die. Salmon are declining and some areas have no species of certain types of fish at all. We must stabilize atmospheric carbon dioxide below 350 parts per million to avoid species extinction of humans and sea life. The ocean is the lungs of the planet. No one

knows how much time we have to stabilize the carbon dioxide levels, but scientists do know that we are on a dangerous precipice.

Please take a moment to write to your representatives and President Obama with the message that we are on a collision course with the ability of our oceans to be the lungs of the planet (see OPC News back page for contact information).

Ask them to act NOW to stabilize atmospheric carbon dioxide pollution. This issue must be addressed immediately for the welfare of all living things.

Please sign the ocean protection petition

Dear readers please help save our seas and sign the Ocean protection petition at the following website. Your children will be glad you did.

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/3/save-our-seas>

State refuses to oversee private MLPA funding

From the California Fisheries Coalition

The Budget Conference Committee rejected proposed language for legislative oversight of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) and for legislative appropriation of the massive foundation money to "back-fill" the MLPA funding. There is no general fund money for any of this. There is no bond money because all of that is "in suspense." Instead, the committee welcomed private money, without any oversight, for the management of Marine Protection Areas (MPAs) in California. The committee went further to invite the Packard Foundation to write fishery management plans, instead of the Department of Fish and Game. This will be a nightmare for fishermen, and fisheries.

The entire fishing community (recreational and commercial) had been waiting and anticipating for months to see if the CA Legislature was going to assert its rightful role and oversee the Administration and its wealthy private supporters as they adopt MPAs. Or would the Legislature just accept the word of the Administration that the process was based on good science and lots of public input? We hoped two legislators (Senators Florez and Ducheny) would help ensure transparency. The fishing community even hoped a special oversight hearing could be held to examine the quality of the science, the economic impacts, and the availability of state funds to actually manage MPAs once they are adopted. Ducheny and Florez ran into a brick wall in Senate President pro Tempore Steinberg's



office. Language (requiring the same financial standards that control public money be applied to the MLPA private money and a delay in new MPAs until fishery management is fully integrated with previously adopted MPAs) was solidly rejected from going into a "budget trailer bill." Instead, Steinberg changed the language to create a victory for anti-fishing folks. His language compliments the governor on the use of private money and private agreements for creating MPAs and encourages him to do the same for adopting Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) under the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA). It invites

the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (RLFF), which has already given nearly \$34 million to create MPAs and others to pony up the millions needed to write and adopt an FMP regulating fishing in areas outside of MPAs. Steinberg recognizes that implementing the MLPA and the MLMA are expensive (\$35 million annually for MLPA), but instead of fixing the problem he wants to get special interest money to restrict fishing. In other words, special interest money could be in total control of fishing throughout the state. With no effective Legislative oversight! Fisher folk & sea vegetable harvesters are threatened by unnecessary restrictions through the unscientific implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA). This legislation mandates creation of Marine Protected

Areas (MPAs) with different levels of protection that would limit human intrusion in various ways. Some areas would even be off limits to kayaks! The recently completed MPA designations extending from San Mateo County to Pt. Arena would take 40 percent of the best fishing grounds out of production. Pt. Arena would be most heavily impacted by this plan.

This plan is coming up for approval in August by the California State Fish & Game Commission. Mendocino County's economy depends in large part on folks ability to access the ocean.

To find out how you can help go to: www.seaweed.net/oceanprotection

Please make some phone calls now: 1.) Call Senators Florez (916-651-4016) and Ducheny (916-651-4040) and thank them for their efforts regarding MLPA oversight and ask them to continue. 2.) Call Senator Steinberg (916-651-4006 Capitol or 916-651-1529 District). Ask: Why is Steinberg undermining Legislative oversight of the MLPA? Why he supports placing tens of millions of dollars in unfunded mandates on the Department of Fish and Game? How can he allow costly new programs to start up while cutting critical existing programs? 3.) Call your local Assembly member and State Senator and ask their help in getting meaningful oversight and controls on this expensive, unfunded MLPA program. You can find you local representatives at www.leginfo.ca.gov Click "Your Legislature" and insert your zip code.

Thank you-California Fisheries Coalition!

Urge the Secretary of commerce to reject Gulf plan for offshore fish farms

From the Marine Fish Conservation Network

In January, Gulf of Mexico federal fishery managers voted to approve a controversial proposal to establish the first-ever management plan regulating offshore aquaculture in U.S. waters under the nation's fisheries law, the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

That plan has been forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval or disapproval.

If approved, it could open the floodgates to large-scale commercial fish-farming in federal waters without allowing Congress to establish a national regulatory framework to ensure that any future siting of fish farms offshore meets stringent standards that protect the environment and coastal fishing communities.

Public comments on the proposed plan must be received by August 3.

Now is the last opportunity for conservation and consumer organizations, fishing groups, seafood businesses, independent scientists and other concerned parties to voice their opposition.

Tell Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke that the Gulf Council's proposed aquaculture plan is ill-suited to the Magnuson-Stevens Act's mission of achieving sustainable fisheries and

undercuts Congress' efforts to establish a national framework for managing any future development of aquaculture in federal waters.

Instructions for Comments



1.) Select and Copy the following sample letter to paste into comment format in Step 2. Of course you may make any edits you think are needed.

Dear Secretary Locke,

Ignoring overwhelming public opposition, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has submitted its proposed offshore aquaculture management plan for your final approval.

The plan lacks the standards needed to protect Gulf ecosystems and their associated fishing communities from the many risks of open ocean aquaculture.

In addition, the plan would directly undercut the efforts of Congress to establish a national framework for managing any

future development of aquaculture in federal waters. In the absence of strong national standards that ensure the protection of our oceans and fishing communities, you should oppose all efforts to site fish farms in U.S. waters.

The Gulf Council's offshore aquaculture plan would be administered under the nation's fisheries law, the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Congress never contemplated aquaculture as part of the 'fisheries' managed by U.S. fisheries managers. Offshore fish farms are not equivalent to fishing vessels.

The responsibilities envisioned by the Gulf Council's aquaculture plan would only add to the demands on the Fisheries Service and the Gulf Council at a time when they should be focusing all of their limited resources on the implementation of the ambitious new provisions and requirements of the reauthorized Magnuson Stevens Act of 2006.

We urge you to reject this ill-conceived plan.

2.) send your comment to:

Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Ave., NWWashington, DC 20230
Call Locke's office at: 1- 202-482-2000 or
email him at: TheSec@doc.gov

Some OPC health tips

By Char Flum

Eat the Right Sea Food

The best choices for sea food are Pacific halibut, farmed clams, wild Alaska salmon, rainbow trout, Dungeness crab and catfish. Good alternatives include Mahi mahi, Alaska king crab, wild clams, U.S. swordfish, Maine Lobster and canned light tuna. We suggest avoiding Atlantic cod, Chilean sea bass,

Atlantic halibut, farmed salmon and red snapper. Eat seafood judiciously and make sure that the market you purchase it from is buying seafood responsibly.

Ride a Bicycle

Fort Bragg is a terrific town to ride a bike in. Riding a bicycle helps reduce your carbon footprint in two ways. You use no gas at all when you ride and bicycles release no carbon dioxide into the atmosphere or the ocean. Ocean

acidification is reaching dangerous levels and this issue must be addressed by everyone. People smile at you when you ride a bike and I ride mine to work and shopping. The addition of two baskets helps carry your groceries. You get a fresh view of the world when you ride a bicycle and see things that you miss in the cab of a car.

Riding a bike is like saying hello to the world!

OPC Needs you

Write Your Officials

President Barack Obama – The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20500, (202) 456-1111, FAX (202) 456-2461, **web - <http://whitehouse.gov>**

U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer – District Office: 1700 Montgomery St., Suite 240, SF 94111, (415) 403-0100, FAX (202) 224-0454, mailing address: 312 N. Spring St., Suite 1748, Los Angeles 90012, **web - <http://boxer.senate.gov>**

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein – 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510, (202) 224-3841, FAX (202) 228-3954; District Office for state and local issues: One Post St., Suite 2450, San Francisco 94104, (415) 393-0707, **web - <http://feinstein.senate.public.gov/>**

Rep Mike Thompson – 1st District, 231 Cannon Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, (202) 225-3311, FAX (202) 225-4335: Coast representative, Heidi Dickerson, 430 N. Franklin St., P.O. Box 2208, Fort Bragg, CA 95437, 962-0933, FAX 962-0934, **web - <http://mikethompson.house.gov/>**

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger – State Capitol, Sacramento 95814, (916) 445-2841, FAX (916) 558-3160 **web - <http://gov.ca.gov>**

State Sen. Patricia Wiggins – Senate District 2, Capitol Building, Room 4081, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 651-4002, FAX (916) 323-6958; Field Rep. Kathy Kelly, Ukiah office 200 S. School St., P.O. Box 785, Ukiah, CA 95482, 468-8914, FAX 468-8931 **web - <http://dist02.casen.govoffice.com>**

Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro – Assembly District 1, State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-001, (916) 319-2001, FAX (916) 319-2101; Ukiah Field Rep Ruth Valenzuela, 311 N. State St., Ukiah, CA 95482, 463-5770, **web - <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a01/>**

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors: 1st District, **Carre Brown**, 2nd District, **John McCowen**; 3rd District, **John Pinches**; 4th District, **Kendall Smith**; 5th District, **David Colfax**. County Administration Center, 501 Low Gap Rd., Rm 1090, Ukiah, CA 95482, 463-4221, FAX 463-4245, **Web: <http://co.mendocino.ca.us/bos/>**

Fort Bragg City Council: Contact at: City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St., Fort Bragg, CA 95437, 961-2823, FAX 961-2802 **citycouncil@fortbragg.com**
Mayor Doug Hammerstrom - **dhammerstrom@fortbragg.com**,
Vice Mayor Dave Turner - **dturner@fortbragg.com**,
Meg Courtney - **mcourtney@fortbragg.com**
Dan Gjerde - **dgjerde@fortbragg.com**
Jere Malo - **jmelo@fortbragg.com**

STOP OCEAN INDUSTRIALIZATION



Go Environmentally Safe, Clean Energy NOW
Ocean Protection Coalition

The Ocean Protection Coalition is a non profit group originally formed to prevent offshore oil drilling off the Mendocino coast.

Now our coastline is threatened by the Minerals Management Service's five-year plan with offshore lease sales.

We are also facing two new threats. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is granting wave power preliminary pilot projects off the Mendocino, Eureka and Ventura County coastlines.

If that wasn't bad enough, now the United States Navy wants to conduct a five-year training exercise in what it calls the Northwest Training Range Complex. This will threaten ocean waters from the Canadian border to the Humboldt/Mendocino county line and beyond. The navy wants to conduct expanded sea and air warfare training and weapons development activities on more than 120,000 nautical square miles off the Pacific Northwest coastline. The navy's weapons training and development activities include bombing, the placement of hundreds of sonar buoys, live firing of guns, missiles, torpedoes and the release of a number of toxic chemicals and substances into the ocean. These include phosphorus, tuolene, depleted uranium and unexploded ordnance containing chromium, chromium compounds and many more.

The navy acknowledges that half a million marine mammals, mostly whales and dolphins could be harmed by the many explosions and especially the sonar. The Gray Whales will have to navigate through this horror 10 times during their migrations to Mexico and back during the navy's five-year war exercises.

OPC is fighting to stop the militarization and industrialization of our oceans. We need your support and help now! We need you to circulate petitions against the destruction of the oceans. We need your written letters to flood the halls of Congress and the White House. We need you at our demonstrations and need you to attend meetings both ours and regulatory agency ones.

We will use the OPC News to give citizens updates on threats to the ocean and our coastline. Please sign up to subscribe for hard copies of the OPC News and pass them around. You can also contact us at: **indigoa@mcn.org** to get on our list serv and receive the **OPC News** electronically.

OPC is a small organization with minimal funds to carry on our important work. If you are able to donate even a small amount, it will be gratefully accepted. Please send your donations to: The Ocean Protection Coalition, P.O. Box 1006, Fort Bragg, CA 95437. We are a non-profit organization. If you would like more information about our group or meeting time and place, please call 964-5035