

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 22-23, 2018

**13. RED ABALONE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN****Today's Item****Information** **Action** 

Receive an update from DFW on development of a red abalone fishery management plan (FMP).

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| • FGC supports red abalone FMP development per MRC recommendation | Oct 8, 2014; Mt. Shasta         |
| • DFW updates to MRC on FMP process and timeline                  | 2015-2017; MRC meetings         |
| • Update on FMP process   | Dec 6-7, 2017; San Diego        |
| • Discussion on FMP scope and content                             | Apr 18-19, 2018; Ventura        |
| • Last update on FMP schedule                                     | Jun 20-21, 2018; Sacramento     |
| • <b>Today's update on FMP development</b>                        | <b>Aug 22-23, 2018; Fortuna</b> |

**Background**

DFW is developing a red abalone FMP for adoption by FGC. Beginning in 2014 and throughout the process, DFW provided updates at MRC meetings on the FMP process, progress, and stakeholder input. DFW abalone project staff has also kept FGC and MRC updated on the unprecedented set of environmental conditions on the north coast and subsequent biological impacts to abalone, and how those are affecting the FMP process and possible provisions.

At the Dec 2017 meeting, DFW provided FGC with an overview of its proposed harvest control rule (HCR) for the FMP. In addition, an alternate HCR option was proposed by The Nature Conservancy using survey methods derived from engaging abalone fishermen in citizen science.; FGC supported advancing the stakeholder-proposed HCR through a peer review process alongside the DFW-proposed HCR. In addition, FGC directed staff to schedule future FMP updates at FGC meetings rather than MRC meetings due to broad interest in the topic.

In Apr 2018, DFW provided a detailed overview of the red abalone FMP components, including the management framework, new environmental and abalone condition factors, management responses, a reopening approach, and an HCR-based management strategy. Scientific peer review is currently underway. In Jun 2018, the California Ocean Science Trust (OST), with support from the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), began coordinating an external, independent scientific peer review of the draft FMP and both the DFW-developed and The Nature Conservancy's stakeholder-developed HCR-based management strategies (Exhibit 1). At the Jun 2018 FGC meeting, DFW notified FGC that an extended timeline was necessary to provide time for adequate peer review of both strategies.

Links to each of the proposed management strategies undergoing peer review are available on OST's abalone FMP peer review webpage (Exhibit 1). A public webinar with the peer review panel, DFW, The Nature Conservancy, and the public is being hosted by OST on Aug 20, 2018; a final peer review report is anticipated in early fall 2018 (exhibits 2 and 3).

## STAFF SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 22-23, 2018

Today, DFW will provide an update on the status of the red abalone FMP peer review, as well as next steps in completing the draft FMP, fulfilling California Environmental Quality Act requirements, and scheduling the FMP and implementing regulations for FGC consideration.

**Significant Public Comments (N/A)****Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. OST peer review webpage and management strategy links (available at [www.oceansciencetrust.org/projects/abalone-fishery-management-plan-peer-review/](http://www.oceansciencetrust.org/projects/abalone-fishery-management-plan-peer-review/))
2. [Email from Errin Ramanujam, OST, announcing webinar engagement opportunity, received Jul 26, 2018](#)
3. [OST frequently asked questions for the recreational red abalone fishery peer review public webinar, Aug 2018](#)

**Motion/Direction (N/A)**

**From:** Errin Ramanujam <errin.ramanujam@calost.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 26, 2018 4:39 PM  
**Cc:** Kelly Sayce; Carolyn Kraft; Hayley Carter; Liz Whiteman; Jessica Williams  
**Subject:** Announcement: Engagement Opportunities to Complete the Red Abalone Fishery Peer Review

Dear Members of the Red Abalone Fishing Community,

As many of you are aware, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is currently developing a recreational red abalone Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for the north coast. Ocean Science Trust, with support from the Ocean Protection Council, has been requested by CDFW, the Fish and Game Commission (FGC), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to coordinate an external, independent peer review of two proposed management strategies for FMP consideration. Both of the management strategies, information about peer review process, and list of peer reviewers are available on our [webpage](#).

To help complete the peer review process, we are interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the red abalone fishing community's scientific questions, as well as share information about the peer review approach. The following engagement opportunities are being planned over the coming weeks to support this information exchange:

- **Solicitation of Community Questions and Priorities:** Next week, Ocean Science Trust will circulate a request for community members to share your science-based questions about the proposed management strategies and the related peer review process. Your questions will be considered and become the foundation for a webinar discussion with the peer review panel.
- **Public Webinar with the Peer Review Panel:** On August 20, we plan to host a public webinar with members red abalone fishing community, the peer review panel co-chairs, CDFW, The Nature Conservancy, and others to discuss the questions submitted, provide clarifications, and outline timeline considerations beyond the peer review. A high-level summary of questions submitted and responses from the webinar will be included in the final peer review report and made available to CDFW and the public to inform the FMP process.
- **Final Peer Review Report Q&A Webinar:** Looking ahead to September, we anticipate hosting a second webinar focused on reviewing the completed peer review report and answering questions about final recommendations.

CDFW continues to seek input from California Tribes and native communities on the red abalone FMP process, and the peer review process provides ongoing opportunity for consultation. For more information, please visit CDFW's Red Abalone FMP [webpage](#).

Please visit our [webpage](#) for updates about these engagement opportunities, which will be posted as information becomes available. We would also appreciate your help in circulating this information to your peers and constituents via your newsletters, blogs, social media, and other communications outlets. Do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions, and we look forward to being back in touch next week with additional details on the process for submitting questions.

All our best,  
Errin & Jessica

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## **FAQ: Recreational Red Abalone Fishery Peer Review Public Webinar**

*August 2018*

### **How has the recreational red abalone fishery been managed to date?**

The recreational red abalone fishery is currently managed by the Abalone Recovery Management Plan (ARMP). Until a new Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) is adopted, the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) are required to adhere to the ARMP.

### **Is the peer review considering how density surveys are conducted?**

In 2014, an Ocean Protection Council-Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) peer review panel reviewed the application and methodologies for density survey estimates as they existed under the ARMP. Density survey estimates in the new CDFW proposed FMP have some similarities and differences to those in the ARMP. The peer review panel is assessing the scientific rigor of the proposed density survey methods to inform the current FMP process.

### **Why is time and effort being invested in reviewing a closed fishery?**

The focus on developing a FMP for the North Coast recreational red abalone fishery began many years ago when the fishery was still open. The intention is that this FMP can outline any number of management strategies that could be implemented under any current or future scenarios including a closed fishery, rebuilding stock, or open recreational fishery, along with other management considerations. CDFW and FGC plan to discuss the final peer reviewed report and the next phase of the FMP process at their upcoming FGC meeting in October 2018.

### **Who are the peer reviewers?**

The scientific peer reviewers are a group of seven scientists selected by the OPC-SAT to review the science used in the abalone Fisheries Management Plan (FMP). These individuals come from all over the world and specialize in a range of disciplines including fisheries science, ecology, oceanography, population dynamics, etc. A list of the peer reviewers is available on the [Recreational Red Abalone Peer Review website](#). The peer reviewers responsibility is to make sure the FMP uses the best available science to inform management approaches.

### **What is the peer review panel reviewing?**

Two proposed management strategies have been submitted for review, one from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and a second from a stakeholder group of fishermen, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and researchers. The peer review panel will be reviewing both proposals.

### **How are community members, including commercial fishermen, involved in the peer review process?**

Ocean Science Trust (OST) has worked to build new elements into this peer review, based on stakeholder feedback, in support of information sharing and building transparency into the peer review process. While some parts of the review are not yet publicly available, many aspects have been shared including both draft proposed management strategies, reviewer

instructions, and the ongoing list of questions and data requests sent to both management strategy proposal teams, all of which can be viewed on the [Recreational Red Abalone Peer Review website](#).

OST also has two community engagement webinars planned for the review. The first webinar is on August 20 at 1:00pm, if you would like to participate please visit the [Recreational Red Abalone Peer Review website](#) for all the details. A high-level summary of stakeholder questions submitted and responses from the webinar will be included in the final peer review report and made available to CDFW to inform the FMP process. The second webinar will be scheduled upon the close of the review, most likely early October, to share the results with community members and allow for questions and discussion about the findings.

**Will the FGC take red abalone fishery community members questions into consideration?**

The FGC will always consider any testimony on an issue before them.

**How can red abalone community members participate?**

California Ocean Science Trust invites members of the red abalone community and other interested parties to engage in an information exchange with the Recreational Red Abalone Peer Review Panel co-chairs during a public webinar on August 20. This is an opportunity for members of the red abalone community to have their questions answered by the peer review panel and Ocean Science Trust. For more information on how to participate in the webinar and additional information about the peer review process, please visit the [Recreational Red Abalone Peer Review website](#).