



OWEWG Conference Call

March 3, 2022

Attendance: Amanda Gladics, Caren Braby, Troy Buell, Kelly Corbett, Brittany Harrington, Sheila Garber, Hugh Link, Susan Chambers, Ron Mason, Justin Yager, Victoria Knorr, Jim Rice, Gway Kirchner, John Corbin, Clint Funderburg, Lauren Saez, Dennis Heinemann, Colleen Weiler, Leigh Torres, Rick Lillienthal, Cari Brandberg, Cody Chase, Angee Doerr, Stuart Schuttpelz, Tony Pettis

Summary

- The meeting opened with Amanda Gladics going through participant introductions and purpose of the meeting which was to discuss the transition of OWEWG toward an official advisory committee to ODFW and the proposed approaches to reconvene the group, expectations of participants, and group processes. She provided a brief review of how OWEWG originally came together, the current role, and the strengths and limitations of the existing group processes. Amanda described the the role of Oregon Sea Grant (OSG) as a catalyst for discovery, understanding, and resilience, and rationale for why the time is right for a transition of the group to an ODFW-convened advisory committee including OSG's lack of staff resources to maintain it in the long-run and ODFW's specific needs for an advisory group to help implement the CP.
- Caren Braby provided an update on ODFW's [draft Conservation Plan](#) and the proposed framework for advisory committees as defined within the CP (slides 1-5 of the [meeting presentation](#)). The group had some discussion of the group's purpose, objectives and scope of work including the following:
 - Group members asked about the group's involvement in helping advise ODFW on broader entanglement issues including other fisheries, other entanglement issues such as offshore wind development and broader anthroporhic stressors on marine mammals. ODFW staff clarified that under the CP, ODFW needs to identify advisory groups for specific functions and that is being proposed as the main function of the group moving forward. Caren further described that the scope of the committee could go beyond that, but need to consider workload capacity of the group and ODFW . One member acknowledged that circumstances have changed a lot since OWEWG was first convened, and stated that before entering the Incidental Take Permit (ITP) process Oregon was just trying to be proactive in addressing the issues and now it needs to be approached more defensively than before. A couple members expressed concerns that a broader scope would likely entail members from additional categories and that an entirely separate group may be preferable for that purpose. Two group member suggested that changing the name of the group might help more accurately describe the purpose, suggesting Advisory Committee on Entanglements in Dungeness crab fishery (ACED).
 - A member asked if the new committee would exclusively be concerned with ESA-listed species since many Dungeness crab entanglements involve non-listed species such as gray whales. ODFW staff clarified that's not within the scope of the specific need for CP

- implementation since it is not a covered species of the plan, but that the group could discuss if there was need or interest in doing so in the future.
- A couple members urged ODFW to consider at least equal representation of different (non-industry) stakeholders for the new group, since ODCAC will be the more industry-focused group and represent diversity of fleet.
 - Members asked if future group members need to be OR-based or if ODFW would be open to bringing in issue experts from CA, WA, or even E Coast. ODFW staff responded that typically our advisory groups are limited to people who are active in OR, but this group and issue is different so ODFW will consider. Another meeting participant suggested individuals not in Oregon who have the potential to make contributions to the group could be advisors, rather than members, citing a similar role for advisors that are based elsewhere in the CA entanglement group.
- Brittany Harrington provided an overview of the [draft charter](#) that ODFW prepared for the proposed advisory committee (slides 6-7 of the [meeting presentation](#)). The group had discussion and feedback on the proposed draft charter and group process including the following:
 - A couple of members suggested committing the group to more than one meeting per year for group cohesiveness and tracking of issues. One suggestion included thinking about timing meetings for pre- and post-crab season.
 - One member expressed concerns about the expectation to bring broader input from their networks to group discussions. The concern included difficulty of characterizing your own individual input as it changes over time with new information, let alone tracking other people's input on issues when they may or may not be tracking it as closely. One member suggested that meeting materials be provided one month in advance of meetings to help them solicit input from others on issues to share at meetings.
 - One member had concerns that the language in the charter regarding the group developing "recommendations" was not consistent with ODFW's intent for how group input would be considered and used. ODFW clarified that ODFW intends to listen and evaluate all of the input from the group to identify proposed actions and that there will not be a voting system. ODFW staff stated they will look at the charter language to make that intent more clear.
 - Kelly Corbett described the [proposed application](#) and application process for seating future advisory committee members (slides 8-10 of the [meeting presentation](#)). The group had discussion and feedback on the application questions and proposed process and timeline including the following:
 - One member asked if the information on how to apply will be emailed out to existing members. ODFW staff said that it would be, as well as to the interested parties email distribution list that Amanda has maintained on this issue.
 - One member expressed support for maintaining the past group's open communication between researchers and industry in terms of on the water observations. ODFW staff stated that this is still listed as a group objective.

- A couple of members expressed concerns about the need for existing members to apply for a group that they have been on for many years. There were concerns that ODFW might make the process overly complicated and that OSG might be better suited to maintain the group. OSG staff re-stated that they cannot commit to maintaining the group for the duration of the ITP/CP process, but that they would like to continue attending meetings and thinking through how OSG can play a role in addressing the entanglement issue. ODFW staff stated the application is intended to be simple, and the process will provide the agency and the public a transparent and clear process for group participation moving forward.
- One member suggested having the entanglement summits every three years to align with NMFS MMPA determinations for the ITP, and since technology for alternative gear is picking up pace in development.
- Amanda Gladics provided time for open public comment. Comments included:
 - One meeting attendee agreed with the suggestion of having more than one meeting per year. They also agreed that it is difficult to bring more diverse opinions than your own as advisor.
 - One meeting attendee stated that everything sounded straightforward and they appreciated the hard work going into this.
- OSG and ODFW staff wrapped up the meeting by thanking everyone for the feedback and relaying that staff would evaluate all of it soon. ODFW plans to provide the group with a meeting summary and a finalized group charter. ODFW anticipates starting the application process for the new group this spring and convening the new group for a kick-off meeting in the fall.