

Achieving Coastal 30x30

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Explore Coastal 30x30 Solutions

Wednesday, March 8th, 2023

10:00am – 12:00pm Pacific Time

Webinar Objectives:

- Learn about federal and state coastal 30x30 priorities and tools.
- Explore coastal multi-benefit 30x30 solutions and learn how 30x30 is being achieved at different scales across the US.
- Gain insights on how to frame your projects through a multi-benefit coastal 30x30 lens.

Links and Contact Information (If Shared)

- Mary Schoell's email: Mary.schoell.ctr@dem.ri.gov
- Mike Esgro's email: Michael.esgro@resources.ca.gov
- Gabriela Polo's email: gabriela.polo@coastal-quest.org
- Doug Harper's email: dharper@malamamaunlua.org
- <https://www.noaa.gov/america-the-beautiful>
- <https://www.opc.ca.gov/30X30>
- www.noaa.gov/infrastructure-law

Webinar Presentations

Tegan Hoffmann, Executive Director, Coastal Quest, About this webinar series and introduction to Coastal 30x30

Panel #1- National and Regional 30x30 Priorities and Implementation

- ***Lauren Wenzel, Director, NOAA's Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Center, "Conserving and Restoring, America the Beautiful"***
- ***Michael Esgro, Senior Biodiversity Program Manager & Tribal Liaison, California Ocean Protection Council "Conserving 30% of California's coastal waters by 30x30"***

Discussion/Q&A -Panel #1

- **What are some of the coastal adaptation and conservation/restoration tools you are promoting for project proponents to utilize to achieve multi-benefit solutions outlined in AtB?**
 - Lauren: NOAA can assist local organizations to identify the threats to the areas/resources they're trying to conserve and the adaptation options.
 - Establishment of communities of practice is critical to pool knowledge
 - Looking at the multi-benefits areas can provide

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- Mike: We'd want new protections to be climate resilient – durability is about tough reversal without public processes.
- **Regarding the California definition of "conserve", how does "durable" and "durability" fit with adaptive management?**
 - It seems like these terms are in conflict, but they are not. Durability = these areas can't be reversed easily; adaptively managing MPA network is critical
- **How is NOAA/OPC sharing information, funding with priority communities and ensuring achievement of Justice 40 goals? What are listservs or ways that things are being announced?**
 - OPC funds a lot of research and community-oriented multi-benefit projects
 - OPC has worked on and is interested in furthering environmental justice discussions
 - Historic opportunity with infrastructure law and IRA for Tribes and underserved communities: <https://www.opc.ca.gov/30X30>, www.noaa.gov/infrastructure-law, <https://www.noaa.gov/america-the-beautiful>
 - Friday's webinar addresses funding- what is available for underserved communities & Tribes
- **Mike, can you speak more about Indigenous Marine Stewardship Areas in California? How would this idea work?**
 - There needs to be a pathway for conserving areas that are traditionally stewarded by Tribes, but the OPC is still figuring out what that will look like in practice.
- **Lauren, what is the status of the 'Atlas' and what opportunities are available to provide information?**
 - There have been lots of public comment opportunities
 - Public said what they want to see in the Atlas—what counts, location of protected areas, conservation benefits. Beta version of the Atlas available in Spring 2023—NOAA will request feedback
 - Website coming soon *conservation.gov* to serve as matchmaker between needs & resources (funding, technical assistance)
- **I have not heard anything today about conserving the functions of rivers and streams. Will they be specifically addressed in 30x30 programs? Seems like they are essential for biodiversity and resilience.**
 - Mike: We know land and ocean are interconnected though these have been discussed separately (OPC also regularly works with freshwater staff)
 - Land/sea connectivity will be addressed in the OECM and NMS discussions
 - Lauren: NOAA knows freshwater ecosystems constantly need support
 - Projects can help identify linkages between the ecosystems

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- **How is NOAA/OPC coordinating on transboundary white water to blue water issues?**
 - OPC wants to discuss internally how CA coordinate with Mexico, Canada, and other border groups
 - NOAA does international work for species and habitats that are connected across America
 - Learning networks and transboundary coordination are beneficial
- **How do you quantify/ determine that an area falls under the 30x30 definition of conserved (durability and biodiversity protection)? Do the state and federal definition of conserved match?**
 - Mike: For land, GAP code metrics match well with the definition of conservation (if land is acquired and protected, it is conserved)
 - There is not a GAP code for waters so the OPC must interpret this definition.
 - MPAs (conserved)- monitor biodiversity, have had positive results, this is hard to measure definitively though
 - OECMs- OPC is analyzing on a case-by-case basis, looking at current protection and ways we strengthen that (this approach allows for flexibility in designations)
 - Lauren: National language on “conserved” is aligned with the states
 - NOAA retains a MPA inventory: they currently count 28% of US waters in it and include all national sanctuaries
- **How do you leverage/work within the different ownership and management structures for waterways for 30x30? For example: California’s estuaries have a variety of ownership.**
 - US waters are public so no question of who owns what
 - However, it is important to work with everyone involved in US waters to understand conservation outcomes, so management should and is looking to address the rights of indigenous people
 - Estuaries are a special case- those areas may incorporate private ownership

Panel #2- Local Coastal 30x30 US Case Studies

- **Mary Schoell**, Project Coordinator, Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NBNERR), Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management “Pathways to Resilience: Ensuring a Future for Coastal Wetlands” FL, MA, NC, NJ, RI, SC)
- **Doug Harper**, Executive Director, Malama Maunalua, “Ahupua-a Management in Maunalua Bay”
- **Gabriela Polo**, Director, Coastal Quest “Water quality protection areas: a multi-benefit solution to protect and restore California’s coastal water”
- **Robert Mayer**, University of Puerto Rico “Strengthening the Resilience of Communities in Puerto Rico to Extreme Weather through the Ecological Restoration of Coastal Ecosystems”

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Discussion/Q&A-Panel #2

- **Many of you were able to get your projects funded through IRA or IJA funding. How did you engage public agency partners to ensure your projects address these funds' goals? Examples: working with NOAA or NFWF or State level agencies. What is an approach that worked well?**
 - Robert: We worked closely with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Environmental Resources (PRDNER)- originally had communication issues with them
 - Mary: The reserve system has many longstanding partnerships- universities, NOAA, etc.
 - Doug: We brought state/federal partners in early, identified their goals and noted what our group could do to address them
 - Permitting is big hurdle, building connections helped get work approved
 - Mindset was: anything we get is good, don't rely on them for funds
- **What advice do you have for someone starting to design and plan a multi-benefit coastal project? What do you wish you knew at the beginning that you know now?**
 - Doug: In Hawaii, geographically defining your work area helps identify key organizations to reach out to
 - We worked in 3 watersheds- identified key stakeholders in that area
 - Having a NFWF grant helps bring people to the table
 - Robert: Project planning is key; things take more time than you think
 - Plan for crises, involve the communities and get their buy in (it is difficult when they are not interested/involved)
 - Mary: Build your budget to allow everyone to participate in system-wide opportunities (group meetings etc.)
 - Gabriela: Root your project in a needs assessment, understand what you are responding to, engage communities and diverse stakeholders.
- **Robert, who/what organizations are your key partners on the main island?**
 - PRDNER, USFWS, Para la Naturaleza and Protectores de Cuenca
- **How did the community around your project site shape the project?**
 - Robert: North coast of Puerto Rico is heterogeneous.
 - Our Luisa project was in area with mostly African Puerto Ricans residents- culturally distinct, underrepresented
 - This area suffered after Hurricane Maria - some populations isolated for weeks, lots of erosion
 - Residents supported our work after the hurricane because of how scared they were
 - Doug: We found groups and communities that had specific interests in the area and tied our restoration back to their interests.

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- We pursued targeted outreach to make inroads with the communities
- **Have there been any studies or pilot programs on planting eel grass ROI regarding the nursery production of new fish sources and carbon sinks, etc?**
 - Michael: I think so, but to be honest this is a little outside my area of expertise. OPC does have a goal to preserve the existing 15,000 acres of seagrass beds in the state, and create an additional 1,000 acres, in 2025.
- **In other parts of the world, OECMs include Privately Protected Areas (PPAs) that are also promoted by IUCN, see IUCN Resolution 36 of 2016 & Best Practice Guide (example Chumbe Island in Zanzibar/Tanzania). Any chance in the US?**
 - Michael: In general, waters in the US are public, not private, so this isn't so applicable. There are a few areas that are leased for aquaculture, etc -- I think we should be working with those managers on conservation actions.
- **Does the OPC have an idea yet of the type of process (and standards, criteria, etc.) they will use to conduct the inventory of OECMs?**
 - Michael: we are still figuring out exactly how we will support a science-based evaluation of OECMs, but in general we will be starting with global criteria and adapting them to the CA context. Leaning on expert/public input throughout process.
- **Are the OPC topical webinars recorded? If so, where can we access the OECM session recording?**
 - Michael: you can find recordings here: <https://www.opc.ca.gov/30X30>
- **What barriers or challenges are you seeing at the federal/state level to implementing 30x30 in the face of increasing pressures to use marine resources for human consumptive needs (such as, off-shore wind farms, desalination, etc)?**
 - Lauren: great question. As important as offshore wind, aquaculture, desal, and other human uses of the ocean will be in the future, these activities can have impacts on biodiversity. I think 30x30 can help to conserve important areas for biodiversity while these other efforts move forward.
- **Capacity for working with our community is a need - where can we go to get funding to help with developing a strategy?**
 - There are some funds through the IRA and BIL that can help with capacity building - ask your question on Fri for more details!
- **Great webinar! What is OPC doing to support tribes in growing their capacity to lead coastal resilience efforts, especially urgent needs for understanding and saving intertidal biodiversity?**
 - Hi Dan- thanks! OPC recently adopted a Tribal Engagement Strategy that lays out some specific opportunities for tribal partnership:

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https://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20230124/OPC-Tribal-Engagement-Strategy-508.pdf

- **How do you obtain funding for Environmental Justice: access for communities historically left out of conservation?**
 - Not answered
- **Will federal funding for tribal projects include non-federally recognized tribal projects?**
 - Lauren said she would be happy to check.
- **Lauren, Some of us would like to discuss MPAs in federal waters - can I check in with you or who is the right person to discuss some ideas here on the central Oregon coast?**
 - Lauren asked participant to reach out to her
- **How can we coordinate kelp restoration/conservation efforts amongst the many entities & agencies?**
 - Michael: OPC and the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife are helping to coordinate many of the kelp research and restoration efforts in CA. We've supported a lot of pilot work in recent years and are now learning from those results to support a more proactive and coordinated approach to kelp management in CA. See more here: https://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20210216/Item7_KelpActionPlan_ExhibitA_FINAL.pdf
- **About the transboundary question, we have a paper under revision about the implementation of marines reserves design in a transboundary context (California and Mexico), based on biophysical principles. Is there an email where I could share the paper in the near future?**
 - Hi! Please send the paper to info@coastal-quest.org and we'll integrate it into the notes. Thank you!
- **I'm wondering how the relative health of the conserved/protected areas is taken into account in regards to funding. For instance, even if a given area is protected, it may be in a vulnerable state in terms of biodiversity (i.e. not particularly durable). Is there a bias in funding toward the protection/conservation of new lands/waters vs. enhancement of existing spaces?**
 - I wouldn't say that there's a bias one way or the other. For coastal waters, I think both will be needed, i.e. conserving new areas based on community needs or emerging science, as well as enhancing conservation measures in areas that already exist, like Sanctuaries or OECMs.

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- **Mary - is there any research or information on managing sediment deposition to raise marsh levels as sea level rises?**
 - Mary: This is definitely a management technique that reserves (some who are part of this project) are exploring. Some of the reserve work on this can be seen here: <https://www.nerra.org/reserves/science-tools/tlp/>

Engagement Opportunities

- Funding Opportunities: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SAqteBOLhHwLH0BEfNSw-zaL6kgTjg5PsPEXtf9fub0/edit>
- Click here to view all three webinar recordings: <https://www.coastal-quest.org/our-programs/protecting-and-restoring-coastal-ecosystems/coastal-30-x-30/>