

FTS-DOC-CONFERENCING

**Moderator: Andrew Winer
August 13, 2010
12:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants will be able to listen only until the question-and-answer session of the conference. At that time, if you would like to ask a question, you may do so by pressing star, 1.

I would also like to remind participants that today's conference is being recorded. If anyone has any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Now, I will turn the call over to Mr. Andy Winer, Director of Internal Affairs of NOAA. Sir, you may begin.

Andrew Winer: Good afternoon everybody, or good morning for those of you on the West Coast and Hawaii. We want to welcome you to our constituent call this afternoon. And we have hopefully on the line members of Regional Fishery Management Councils, State Fishery Commissions, and MAFAC members and staff members.

And with us this afternoon on phone or in person here in Silver Spring is myself, I'm Andy Winer. Contrary to the way I was introduced, I'm actually

the Director of External Affairs. I'm also joined this afternoon by Sally Yozell, who's the Director of Policy for NOAA; Sam Rauch, who's the Deputy, Deputy Administrator for Regulatory Programs; Emily Menashes, who's the Deputy Director and the Acting Director of the Office of Sustainable Fisheries.

In addition to that, we have staff members on as well. From the National Ocean Council staff, Andy Lipsky and Sharon Hayes. From the Office of Policy at NOAA, Jen Lukins. From the Office of the Undersecretary, Danielle Rioux. From NOAA Fisheries, Heather Sagar. NOAA Fisheries External Affairs, Laurel Bryant, and also James Chang, External Affairs for NOAA as well. And also Teresa Christopher, Office of Policy for NOAA.

So, the purpose of this call this afternoon is that many of you that are on this call and the groups that you represent graciously participated in roundtable discussions last year, and provided input on the Ocean Policy Task Force's Interim Reports. And now that the final report is out and President Obama has adopted it through his National Ocean Policy, we would like to take this opportunity to report back, share an overview of the policy with some specific insights on its impact on the Councils, and then to provide you with an opportunity to ask some questions.

So, the format for this afternoon, and this morning for those of you on the West Coast and the Pacific, we're going to with having a presentation from Sally Yozell on policy aspects of the policy, a presentation from Sam Rauch on the impacts to Regional Fishery Management Councils, and then a Q&A session.

So at this time, I will turn the floor over to Sally. And at the end of the presentations, we'll tell you how to queue up in order to ask questions.

Sally Yozell: Okay. Great. Good morning, good midday, and good afternoon to folks from around the country. Thank you for joining us. I'm not 100% sure who is - individuals are on the phone, so for those folks who I know well - okay. So, in July on the 19th, the President finally made his final recommendations on the Ocean Policy Task Force, and signed an Executive Order adopting this new National Ocean Policy for the stewardship of our oceans, and coasts, and Great Lakes.

And I mean, it's a major accomplishment. It's a big - it's a historic moment really, for all of us who have been dealing and working with ocean issues for so long. And so, we're very excited about it. And you know for many of you who have worked on these issues for a long time, it really was an evolution out of the US Ocean - Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Commission reports, and we're very excited about it.

So, what is - what's it all about? Well, healthy oceans for us - you know, we really - and I know for you all in particular, healthy oceans really matter. And, it's funny to talk to you all about that, because this is really - you're on the water every day. What you all do for work, the people you work with are really making the difference for all of us. But you know, our oceans you know generate over 50% of our Gross Domestic Product.

The coastal regions are huge economic drivers, and it really is the ocean coast and Great Lakes that hold this - not only just this economic, but the recreational and cultural value, where so many people vacation, and food that produced by you and your colleagues. And it's just - it's very, very important. So, that's a big piece of what we're trying to focus on through the Ocean Policy.

So ocean feast or famine? You know, the future of our oceans are in jeopardy in many ways. They're getting more and more crowded. You all know that better than I. You're out there every day. I wish I was out there every day, but I'm only out there on occasion. But when I do get out, I notice that it's just an increase of whether it's you know, commercial and recreational fishing, whether it's proposed energy facilities, whether it's wind or L&G, or just increase in ship traffic, and increase in science and aquaculture and whatnot. So, it's more and more - it's busier and it's more and more competing the various uses with each other.

And right now, the - our current policies that we have for these various issues really don't address it. They're very much in sort of a (stove fight) manner. I think we have something like 140 laws and regulations that - with over 24 different federal agencies. Then you add to that the states and the local laws and regulations, and it's really confusing, and it's not very well integrated.

And, this whole Ocean Policy - and sort of the basis of it is to try to bring that together and sort of change the way we do business, instead of doing it in these individual sector-by-sector managed areas. Because what we found is - and what you all have told us over the past year is that we really need to make it a much more integrated system.

And so, the Ocean Policy is really ecosystem based, and we have a Coastal Marine Spatial Planning part of it which is all about coordination amongst the many existing management regimes that I was just talking about, and the Federal government, and regions. It's very regionally focused.

And so, the new policies here are going to really require all of our - not just the federal and state entities to work together, but the stakeholders. I mean, we need you all and other stakeholders in the ocean community to really

participate with us, just like you all participated with us as we tried to put together the ocean policy.

So, it really is about shared values. You know, the President announced it and it was really based on the recommendations that came out of the task force that was put together. And you know, the task force traveled all over the country and had I think six regional meetings, over 38 roundtables. We had thousands of written comments and they were all super helpful, and as we put this together - as the many people put it together, and it was based on the input that helped us really develop the policy that was shared on - that was put together and it was really based around these shared values.

And the four shared values are - as you can see on the slide, really balanced ocean health and community prosperity. Level the playing field for all stakeholders. Respect the unique character of each US region. And, make decisions based on the best available science.

So, what are the building blocks as we move forward? To build this shared value into a reality, the National Ocean Policy really focuses on four basic pieces. First of all, there's a National Ocean Council that is made up of the 24 Federal agencies and offices that are charged with trying to coordinate all of this and to set the goals to implement the policy and provide the measurements for the outcomes. And, to ensure that the Ocean Policy really is serving the American public, the communities, and the stakeholders.

Second, there are nine national priority objectives that embrace coordination and integration among all the levels of government to address pressing issues like climate change and ocean acidification.

Thirdly, and I'm not going to go into all nine of them, they'll pop up a little later, so those were just a couple things. Thirdly, Coastal Marine Spatial Planning as a public policy process to help us better determine how the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes are sustainably used and protected now and for the future. To really address this, I said this ever expanding activities that are going on, the competing demands going on for ocean coastal resources.

And then fourth, it sets up what we call regional planning bodies, and that's really to ensure - again as I mentioned earlier, the unique feel of each region where we can have a truly bottom-up approach that really serves the overall United States in ways that truly respects the regional objectives and priorities.

And, we also - the National Ocean Council that will soon meet in - probably in September at - has a Web site from which you can learn more about the issues as we move along and seek to implement, and you can really follow both - you can find all the recommendations in the Executive Order, but you will also be able to follow along as we move forward on the process.

So as I said earlier, there are nine priority objectives and they have sort of been into different buckets. The first is how we do business, and there are four areas there; ecosystems, base management, coastal and marine spatial planning -- I can't read that far...

Man: Informed decisions.

Sally Yozell: Thank you. Informed decisions. Can we go back a slide? Thanks. Informed decisions, and improving understanding, and coordinate and support.

And then there are also - so, those are four, and then we have these five areas of special interests. And as I mentioned earlier about the adapt - climate change.

So, it's really about resiliency and adaptation of climate change and ocean acidification, regional ecosystem protection and restoration, water quality and sustainable practices on land, changing conditions in the Arctic, and ocean and coastal and Great Lakes observations, mapping, and infrastructure. So, those are the nine big priority areas, and both within NOAA and at the National Ocean Council, and in the other agencies, we're evolving ourselves into groups that will really tackle these nine major issues.

So moving towards implementation. As I said at the heart of this whole policy of Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, and that was culled out of those nine areas as a special particular emphasis area, and it's made up of several really important components. The first is you know, we're really thinking of this as a fair and open process for all stakeholders to help us figure out how to manage our oceans, and coasts, and Great Lakes in a better, transparent, integrated way.

And again as I mentioned, it focuses on the unique regional needs. It's a bottom-up approach, where we really are hoping to have as much community and engagement as possible. And, it also is - focuses on management of the ecosystems as a whole rather than species-by-species, sector-by-sector, issue-by-issue approach. And, the basis from which decisions is really - it's focused on science and ensuring that we get - bring in enough data and information so that all the stakeholders engage and involve all the agencies - all the industries really start from a common understanding, a baseline from which decisions can be made.

And, I will just add - one thing that I really want to highlight is that the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, it's not another layer of bureaucracy. It's not a regulation, but it's a way for us to take the existing authorities and really weave them together in a way that makes the most sense for communities, stakeholder, industries, whatnot.

So, the regional focus that I keep talking about. As you can see from this slide, there are nine different regions, because again, one size does not all - does not fit all. Each region and its stakeholders have the opportunity to really tailor their needs and their interests, and have users represented in each of their regions. So, the goal is bottom-ups approach from the regions.

And, the way - the other way that these regional plannings were established and designed is really to mirror the geography of our ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes structures. You know, the ones that already exist, such as the West Coast Governors Association or - I mean the West Coast Governor's Agreement -- excuse me -- or the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and the others.

The way we plan to work this is NOAA will sit on all nine regional planning bodies outlined in the framework, and membership will also include Federal agencies, states, and tribes with authorities that are really relevant to each region. And, members of these regional planning bodies will make - be able to make decisions and commitments throughout the process on behalf of their agency or their interests.

And one of the things that I just want to mention is that during the public comment period, Regional Fishery Management Councils expressed you know, a strong desire to be a part of the regional planning bodies. And so when the task force talked about this, they did not grant specific membership,

but did decide instead to require a formal mechanism for consultation that is unique to the - that is unique and acknowledges the quasi-regulatory rule.

And so, there is this option, and I think what you'll see is the National Ocean Council will revisit this topic as it moves forward. I mean, they haven't met - we haven't even started to figure out how to work it all out. But as we go forward in this process, I think there will - this will be an issue that will be revisited as to how best to truly include the Fishery Management Councils in the process.

The nine - I don't know if you can see them, but on the map are - the nine regions are the Alaska Arctic Region, the Caribbean Region, which includes Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, the Great Lakes Region, Gulf of Mexico Region, the Mid-Atlantic Region, Northeast Region, Pacific Islands Region, which includes Hawaii, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Island, American Samoa and Guam, the South Atlantic Region, and the West Coast Region.

So, the framework for effective Coastal Marine Spatial Planning. It proposes really a three-pronged approach for reconnecting coastal communities with their oceans, coasts, and Great Lake environment. The framework turns the spotlight, as I said, away from D.C. and focuses significantly on the regions and the ecosystems. The units that really make up the environment in each geography.

The framework seeks to establish a decision making process that really provides a mechanism for coastal and ocean stakeholders to engage with one another and plan for the future. And, the framework mandates decision making based on the best available science. And again, all stakeholders and all of us to start to - start off with the same kind of baseline and understanding.

And so the way I see it, and the way we see it is really it's a cooperative effort. It's not a competitive effort. And if we're going to be successful, it just really has to be a transparent, thoughtful way for the multiple uses in the oceans, coastal, and marine environment to really work together sustainably and plan. The Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning includes traditional uses such as commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture, transportation, conservation, and culture, and also looks to emerging uses like renewable energy, recirculating aquaculture systems, and offshore aquaculture.

So again, we start at a level playing field. We use the best available science. We try to figure out how to plan for the future based on all of this.

And then, it also highlights the respect for the local authority. It is important to note the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Process is not intended to delay or halt existing plans for the ocean or coast. It's really about a regionally based collaborative process. And when we get there, we really envision that the resulting coastal and marine spatial plans will really for the first time take into account just the full range of issues, and the National Ocean Council will work to provide guidance and oversight as we move forward regionally.

And, science - again, how many times have I said it? It's really the common ground for our stakeholders. It's - you know, we need to truly have that baseline and integrated decision making, and have it be thoughtfully considered as we look at new activities, and really based on sound science with stakeholder scientists and new tools from which we can build.

So with that, I am going to turn it over to Sam Rauch from the Fisheries Service and have him really go into more depth on the role of Fishery Management Councils. And when Sam is done, we will be more than happy to

answer any questions. I know we just threw an awful lot of information at you, so we'll look forward to that.

Sam Rauch: Thank you, Sally. We have had numerous discussions with the Regional Fishery Management Councils throughout this process. They were one of the key stakeholder groups we reached out initially. We've briefed the Council Chairs and a number of individual Councils. As veterans of a very similar process to what is designed under CMSP, the experienced voice of the Fishery Management Councils will bring immediate depth to the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Process, which is why the framework recognizes that their involvement in Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning is critical.

In addition to the expertise and the science roles that the Council brings to the table, they also have statutory authority to develop the conservation and management measures for fisheries, habitats, and corals. These authorities helped define the roles that the Councils play in marine spatial planning, and puts them on a unique level among all of the participants in the process.

As Sally said, the framework doesn't put the Councils on the Regional Planning Board's initially, but does require that the regional planning bodies establish a formal mechanism for consultation with the Fishery Management Councils on fishery related issues, and envisions a further process in which the NOC is going to assess the future representation and to determine whether or not the Council should be - or certain Councils should be on the regional planning bodies.

Finally, it's important to note that the scientific data - as Sally said, this is a lot - science is engrained in all of this. Scientific data and information generated by the Councils are an important part of both the National and the Regional

information systems designed to support the Council - the CMSP decision making.

I wanted to spend a brief moment and talk about the role of the fishing community itself. We - the commercial and recreational fisherman are important current users of the ocean - current potential future users of the ocean. They support a broad base of community activities through their activities, and contribute to the food security of the nation. Also, recognizes that the fishing interests are important. They will have an opportunity to engage in CMSP in two different ways.

One is directly through the engagement of the Fishery Management Councils. As we know, the Fishery Management Councils are a forum for the vetting of important fishery stakeholder issues, but that alone does not - often, they - that alone is not sufficient. And so, there is a mechanism, and we have encouraged the stakeholders to engage directly through the CMSP, not on the planning body itself, but as input into that planning body. There are important stakeholders in there. We envision a direct line with them.

It is important - we - one of the things we heard throughout the roundtables was a concern that recreational fishing interests were not adequately represented. And as a result, the task force modified the recommendations to draw a clearer distinction between recreational and commercial fishing, and to recognize the importance of having access to the ocean and the opportunity to fish.

Additionally, the task force recognized the importance of these healthy coastal ecosystems to recreational users and the long history of active participation in conservation and stewardship. So, we had always known that the recreational industry was important. We made a special emphasis to raise that.

With that said, let me turn it back over to you for a closing thought if you would like before we open it up to questions.

Sally Yozell: So in general, I guess I just want to acknowledge what - you all know again, better than I but you know, our ocean is really - has run a promise. It's boundless. However, the resources as we know are not. And, this new ocean policy really, really - I mean, it embraces a new ocean ethic, one that recognizes the link between healthy oceans and prosperity. And, I guess that couldn't be more clearly seen or articulated than what we just witnessed in the Gulf.

So, although the policy spells out how our stewardship should (rule), how to evolve to ensure this vibrant ocean of tomorrow, it really does rely on a foundation of education and outreach that is needed to help us grow literacy, a stronger knowledge base about science and education, and empowering members of our coastal communities to become truly active stewards of our ocean and coasts. And, to really modify our own footprint in our ecosystems, understand the sophistication, and move forward in a truly integrated and sophisticated way as we've put together the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning process.

So with that, I'm going to turn it back to Andy Winer. And Andy, it's all yours.

Andrew Winer: Thank you, Sally, and thank you Sam. We hopefully have given you some overview of the new National Ocean Policy, and we would now - I would ask the operator to explain if you have a question what you need to do in order to ask a question.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time if you would like to ask a question, please press star, 1. To withdraw your request, press star, 2.

Once again, to ask a question please press star, 1. One moment please.

Andrew Winer: And while we're waiting to start questions, I do want to remind everybody that we are recording this presentation and it will be made available online as soon as we can do that.

Coordinator: Once again if you would like to ask a question, please press star, 1. One moment.

Once again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star, 1. One moment.

Andrew Winer: Okay. And, we have our first question from Steve LaPan from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. Steve, are you on?

Steve LaPan: Yes, I am. Thanks, Andy.

Andrew Winer:: We can hear you.

Steve LaPan: Okay. Very good. Thanks. I think this probably goes to Sam. Sam, I understand from your presentation that there was some specific outreach to the Regional Fisheries Management Councils, and I'm - I represent an area of the Great Lakes. I'm not aware of any such outreach there, and could you share your thoughts on how you may or may not apply what you're doing on the ocean coast - on the Great Lakes?

Sam Rauch: Well, so that's sort of a two part question. Throughout the process, we did reach out to the Great Lakes Region. Teresa Christopher is here with us. Can you - do you want to describe some of that - recently did for that?

Teresa Christopher: Yes. We had a specific meeting with actually all of the Great Lake states, and including the Fishery Commission up in the Great Lakes. So, that happened about three, four months ago. There was also additional outreach to them prior to that in several different forums.

Sam Rauch: So then, the second part is how this applies to the Great Lakes, and the Great Lakes are treated as one of our - as one of the coasts. There - it is - there is a - it is separate as one of the regions for which we'll have Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning.

We anticipate working with the Great Lakes Commission and trying to determine how that's going to relate to a regional planning body like many of the other existing - there are in many areas of the country existing regional government structures already that could form the basis of the elements of the regional planning body. And so, we intend to work with them and with all of our Great Lakes partners in that effort.

Andrew Winer: Thank you. Our next question is Arthur Newell, New York Department of Environmental Conservation. And Arthur, are on?

Arthur Newell: Yes, I am.

Andrew Winer: Okay. We can hear you. Go ahead and ask your question.

Arthur Newell: My question is how will this new National Ocean Policy initiative cooperate or coordinate with the new other major Federal initiative, the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives?

Sally Yozell: We're all looking at each other trying to understand more about what the Landscape Cooperatives are doing.

Jennifer Lukins: Well also, this is Jennifer Lukins from the NOAA Policy Office. I think that's one of the key things that's outlined in the Policy and in the framework of Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning is to look at all of the other initiatives and planning efforts that are going on within - that are existing in the regions there. And, to do an assessment of what is there that you need to coordinate with in existing plans and programs that you need to build upon.

So, while I can't speak specifically to the initiative that you're talking about, I'm not familiar with the details of that, I think on the regional level if there's things going on at the region, that's where that would be enabled. But also at the National Ocean Council level that sets up the interagency policy committees, that's the whole intent of its integration and cooperation among agencies across the Federal Government horizontally, but also vertically from the local level, state level, up through the Federal Government.

And now, internationally to look at all different components of issues that may interface and impact Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning and the other eight priorities (Jessica)'s outlined in the National Ocean Policy.

Sally Yozell: And just - this is Sally. I am somewhat familiar with the Landscape Cooperative Program out of the Department of Interior I believe. And, I know -- because I just came from a regional program -- that folks in the region have been - the Federal family in the region have been talking about this program

and integrating it with many more of Federal programs. And as we start to pull ourselves together here in Washington and with our National Ocean Council, it will be the kind of area that we will start to set up and integrate and understand so that we better work together. Okay.

Andrew Winer: If we could get the instructions one more time from the operator, and see if anybody else might have a question. Right now, nobody's in the queue.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time again, if you would like to ask a question, please press star, 1. One moment please.

Andrew Winer: And, our next question is from Doug Haymans from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Doug?

Doug Haymans: Thanks for taking the question. Basically, the press release that we got said 2:00 on the start of this conference call, and so we jumped in at 1:25 when we found out it was going on.

I understand that you're going to post the link to the Web site, but you know how soon that's going to be - happen? How soon you're going to post the - this call on the Web site?

Andrew Winer: I'll post the Q&A from this.

Doug Haymans: Well actually more so than the Q&A, because I've been a party to the full Q&A. It's more so the first 25 minutes of this call. Is that going to be posted?

Andrew Winer: Yes. That's going to be posted too.

Doug Haymans: Okay. Any guess as to how long?

Andrew Winer: Probably by Tuesday next week.

Doug Haymans: Okay. Thank you.

Andrew Winer: Next question is from (Jim Gilmore).

(Jim Gilmore): I had the same comment. (Vince O'Shea) who's the Executive Director of the (SMSC) sent an email out this morning announcing that this was going to happen at 2:00 today. So, we just got on early and found out we were late to the party. So, I don't know how many folks you're actually missing.

Andrew Winer: Well, there's actually multiple calls going on this afternoon. So - there's a - the call at 2:00 I believe - is that for commercial?

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Andrew Winer: Yes. So, there are actually multiple calls going on with a similar presentation. So if you want to jump on at 2:00, you'll hear what is a fairly similar presentation. This was more geared to the Regional Fishery Management Councils because there may be some specific issues that relate to those entities. But if you tune in at 2:00, there will be a call that is going to be substantially similar.

James Chang: And it is possible - this is James Chang from the Office of External Affairs. Just thinking it over, there may have been some crossover in some of the invitation lists. And so if you got multiple notices, it may be that you inadvertently opened the wrong one. So, I apologize for that confusion.

Andrew Winer: Okay. Do we have any other questions?

Coordinator: One moment please.

Andrew Winer: Okay. Tom Gorenflo from the Chippewa/Ottawa Resource Authority. Tom, are you on? Can we - can you hear us?

Coordinator: Sir, your line is open.

Andrew Winer: Tom?

Coordinator: Please check your mute button.

Tom Gorenflo: Hello? Okay. I think I'm on now.

Andrew Winer: We can hear you.

Tom Gorenflo: Okay. Yes. I have a question. I think I can barely understand how the coordination/communication will go among the -- as you characterized -- the various fishery - authorities that are in existence now. But, I'm wondering how - or how you envision organizing the Federal government and all the departments that play a role in Fisheries management, say here in the Great Lakes. How you will outreach to them, coordinate them through their multi-multi layers of bureaucracy and get them to be a partner in this process? Do you have any thoughts on that?

Sally Yozell: Yes. This is Sally. I think what I heard you say is how will we organize the Federal entities - the various Federal entities that address Fisheries issues, and how will we get us all working together. Is that more or less the question?

Tom Gorenflo: That's it. Yes.

Sally Yozell: Okay. Well that's a great question, and that's really in many ways the heart of this whole policy is that - as I said earlier, and I think we have something like 140 different regulations with 24 different agencies all dealing with ocean and coastal and Great Lake issues. So, the whole point is now with this National Ocean Council, we will have all of those 24 agencies at the table together, and we're going to break up into certain categories based on the nine like sub-committees.

We're going to work through that. We're going to work through the laws. We're going to work through the data. We're going to work through the decision making. And then, we're also going to be having this same thing done at a regional level. And so it really - the goal is to break down those barriers and work towards the future of integrating this information and coming to solutions in the future versus just sort of working in our own little stove piped areas with our blinders on. It's really all about integration, both from the science part all the way through to the decision making.

Tom Gorenflo: Okay. Thanks. I just would like to stress that I fear what'll happen is the efforts will focus on organizing states, tribes, and NGOs, and so on, and the Federal government will not be - the focus will not be on organizing the Federal government itself.

Sally Yozell: No. Trust me. It will be. I promise. That'll be - I mean, I really do promise because we've already started those meetings and discussions, and believe me; it's the heart of the matter, and that is our goal.

Tom Gorenflo: Okay. Thank you.

Andrew Winer: Okay. Our next question is going to come from Maria Vojkovich from the California Department of Fish and Game.

Maria Vojkovich: Thank you. I came in slightly late and I didn't know whether I missed something about - discussions about how you're approaching supporting this whole initiative, and funding basis, or new staffing, or how far that might go? I haven't heard anything about that yet.

Sally Yozell: Well, that's a great question. And already, at least in the Federal family we have provided staff to the various Federal agencies or providing staff to this National Ocean Council. And then as far as the regions go, a couple different things. First, we're kind of repurposing a lot of the dollars that we have so that we're trying to have our budgets in the future be more focused on integrating and addressing the areas that are highlighted in the Ocean Policy. I guess that's number one.

Secondly, there is some -- though very limited -- new funding for this. I think the Department of Interior had received a little bit. NOAA received a little bit. We received - in the President's budget anyway, there was \$20 million for regional ocean...

Woman: Partnerships.

Sally Yozell: ...partnership programs. And of that \$20 million, what we've heard is it is included in the House Appropriations bill. It is not included in the Senate bill yet, so we need to work on that if we're going to get that money out to the regions for their use.

We also, for NOAA itself in creating its own program for Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning, we had requested \$6.7 million in our FY 2010 budget, and

that money was for our own program, but also to really send grants out to the communities or the experts on trade-off analysis and ecosystem service analysis and whatnot. And of that, the Senate put in \$6.7 million in their mark, and we've heard that the House has \$6.5 million. And, I stand corrected. I said 2010. I meant 2011. Yes.

So, there's a little bit of money. We've got to repurpose our current pledges. We really have to focus on this, and we've got to keep moving forward and try to get money and resources out to the regions to make it work.

Maria Vojkovich: And if I may just follow-up on that?

Sally Yozell: Yes.

Maria Vojkovich: Just is there any consideration for participants in this partnership that go beyond the Federal structure? And what I'm kind of referring to is in the regional councils in the states, the demands for staffing and participation continue to climb, and the support for our involvement in those isn't around. And, I'm just concerned about not being able to participate at the level that's necessary or desired.

Sally Yozell: Right. Right. So, I hear where you're coming from now. Just so I'm correct. You are with the California...

Maria Vojkovich: Department of Fish and Game, and I'm a Council Member for California.

Sally Yozell: Okay. Great. So you know, there are these existing regional ocean governance entities like the West Coast Governor's Agreement for example. They exist, but there's going to be regional partnership grants. That's the \$20 million I

was talking about. They'll be competitive grants that the various regions can apply for.

And the goal of those funds are to get both Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning really operational, as well as to get regional coordination you know, off the block if it doesn't exist. I mean, it obviously exists where you all are, because you have this great West Coast Governor's Agreement. But, it does provide funds on a competitive basis for the regions.

If we can get - again, I said that was the President's budget. We need to get the money out of the Appropriations Committees for that to be available. We've already put out a Federal...

Woman: Funding opportunity.

Sally Yozell: ...funding opportunity request, so I urge everyone to go check that out. It's in the Federal Register. And will we have that on the - will that be up on the site?

Woman: (Unintelligible).

Sally Yozell: We can make it available to folks on the calls. But so, I urge you to check out the Federal funding opportunity. And you know, but - if there are no appropriations, we won't be able to implement them obviously.

Maria Vojkovich: Thank you.

Andrew Winer: Okay. At this time, we don't see any further questioners in the queue, so unless somebody jumps on in the next 10 to 15 seconds, we're going to wrap this up a little bit early.

For those of you who joined us a little bit late and would like to hear the presentation, at 2:00 if you call 888-324-3621 and you - the passcode is OCEANPOLICY2. And, you could then listen to the presentation if you missed it at 1:00. Otherwise, we will be posting it. We do expect it to be up online by Tuesday next week, together with the question-and-answer session.

And seeing no further questions, we want to thank all of you for being part of this call today. We look forward to working with you over the next several months as we move forward with the implementation of the National Ocean Policy. And if you have questions, please let us know and we'll be more than happy to follow-up with you.

But, good afternoon to some of you. Good morning to the rest of you. And, have a good weekend.

Coordinator: This does conclude today's conference. Thank you for attending. You may disconnect at this time.

END