
Joint Sanctuary Advisory Council Workshop to Inform Proposed Expansion – Coastal Aquaculture

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Current Mariculture Operations in CA

- There are approximately 5,900 acres of tidelands used for mariculture – 17 commercial businesses
 - Of that 1,952 acres are managed by CDFW as state-water bottoms
 - Remaining acres are granted tidelands or privately owned tidelands (Humboldt Bay and Southern CA)
- Major growing areas: Humboldt and Tomales Bays, Drakes Estero, Morro Bay, and Southern California

Current Mariculture Operations in CA

- Dominant species:
 - Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*)
 - Manila clams (*Venerupis philippinarum*)
 - Mussels (*Mytilus* spp.)
- CA is the second leading shellfish producer on the West Coast
 - ~1.72 million pounds of shellfish in 2011



CDFW's Role in Mariculture

- While ensuring the protection of public trust resources, provide for environmentally safe aquaculture in CA state waters to:
 - Augment food supplies
 - Expand employment
 - Promote economic activity
 - Increase native fish stocks
- 1933 – Fish and Game Code
 - Allotments of State tidelands

Leasing of State Water Bottoms

- Application process through Fish and Game Commission
 - No leases shall be issued, unless determined it is in the public interest
- FGC has authority to adopt regulations governing terms of leases
- Project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

California Environmental Quality Act



- Trustee Agency under CEQA
- Maintain natural resources for their ecological value and benefit to people
 - No net loss of wetlands policy

Potential Environmental Impacts of Mariculture Operations

■ Potential positive benefits

- Improving water quality
 - Eelgrass
- Habitat
 - Shorebirds
 - Fish
- Nutrient cycling

■ Potential negative impacts

- Eelgrass
- Non-native culture
- Vector for disease
- Conversion of wetlands
 - Shorebirds
 - Fish

Thank you and Questions



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