



Fish Contamination Education Collaborative Partners Meeting

12 December 2024

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

A.K. Warren Water Resource Facility

Operation Auditorium

[24501 S Figueroa St, Carson, CA 90745](https://www.lacsd.org/24501-S-Figueroa-St-Carson-CA-90745)

Attendees*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

Renee Jordan Ward**

Judy Huang

John Chesnutt

EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. (EA):

Evana Newberry**

Daniel B. Stephens & Associates

(DBS&A):

Heather Hackstedde**

Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD):

Chi-Li Tang**

Boat People SOS (BPSOS):

Hang Nguyen

California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA):

Wesley Smith

Tran Pham Huyen

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium:

Bayne Westrick-Snapp

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

Lt. Michael Vicknair

Dan Waligora**

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH):

Alberto Rivadeneyra**

Barbara DeRidder**

Eugene Loi

California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC):

Chinh Sheow

Daniel Cordero

Chinese Christian Herald Crusade (CCHC)

Shelly Chen

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

Emily Duncan

University of Southern California (USC):

Linda Chilton

Heal the Bay

Zoe Collins**

Meredith McCarthy

*Total attendees = 22

**In-person attendance



Meeting Purpose

Bring FCEC partners together to meet new members and provide updates on program activities.

Discussion Points

The meeting progressed through the following discussion points:

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

- Importance of Partners meeting and reducing the consumption of contaminated fish.
- EPA reported 10-12k community members are reached annually, and that EPA is regularly engaged in research.
- Evana Newberry and Chris Vanwart introduced as the new project managers at EA.
- Online and in-person introductions for all attendees.

2. EPA Update – Renee Jordan Ward (EPA)

- Updates since last meeting: New grant awarded to LACDPH in July 2024 to conduct outreach to local health professionals and pier sign installations, Third Five-Year Review for PV Shelf completed, community involvement plan in progress (will include additional demographic analyses at three high angler areas).
- Safer Seafood “Toxin Tracker” DDT advisory application developed for public to generate serving recommendations based on catch.
- New tip card finalized, printed, and distributed. Positive feedback from anglers regarding the new design.
- New pier sign design finalized and is in printing process, *sign replacements are an action item - EPA will follow up with everyone via email for FCEC input.*
- The first semi-annual newsletter was distributed in June 2024 to 48 people, including registered community members.
- Previous Annual Reports are available on the website, and the 2023-2024 reports will be published to pvsfish.org in the coming weeks.
- Scripps Institution of Oceanography requested FCEC angler outreach data.
- Community outreach updates (booth in box):
 - New fishing poles with stronger magnets distributed
 - New tablecloths and table runners distributed
 - New outreach staff identification lanyards distributed
 - New stuffed fish planned for 2025

3. Pier Angler Outreach Updates

- Renee Jordan Ward (EPA) provided an overview of the Pier Angler Outreach conducted by Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Heal the Bay, and DBS&A during the August 2023 – July 2024 reporting period (gap in outreach between April 6th - May 31st due to Heal the Bay to DBS&A transition), as follows:
 - Most commonly reported awareness sources are pier signs (1), and the angler outreach teams (2).
 - Decrease in reported awareness since 2023.
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- Increase in new anglers during the day since 2023.
- Decrease in reported awareness in evening anglers. Evening outreach is only conducted at two piers (Venice and Redondo Piers).
- 9 piers were addressed collectively: Santa Monica, Venice, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Rainbow Harbor, Pier J, Belmont Pier, Seal Beach, Cabrillo Pier.
- A total of 9,699 anglers were contacted, which includes: 4,077 new anglers, 4,507 repeat anglers, and 1,115 anglers declining or not able to provide this answer.
 - 8,594 anglers agreed to speak.
 - 5,852 reported being aware of contamination (68.1%).
 - 5,755 tip cards were handed out to 2,352 anglers.
 - More anglers were present and were reached in 2024 compared to 2023.
 - Reported awareness is down from previous year. The discussion included considerations that may be due to influx of new anglers and decrease in effectiveness from an important awareness source: degraded pier sign quantity and quality. New signs are coming, and this should hopefully help with awareness levels.
 - 319 “Do Not Consume” fish identified during outreach. Primary “Do Not Consume” fish include topsmelt (246) and white croaker (44).
 - Seasonal fluctuations remain consistent (more new anglers in summer months vs winter months)

Note: The angler and fish-related data presented in the above bullet have been updated compared to the FCEC meeting slide data, which was found to have selected AOP data errors.

- Modified angler outreach pilot schedule launched July 2024; *feedback on continuing this type of varied schedule is an FCEC action item - EPA will follow up with everyone via email for FCEC input.*
 - Piers visited 3 days a week during various times Monday – Sunday.
 - Goal of the schedule change was to try to get more representative information from across all days and times, and to be able to evaluate that data specific to each pier to see if this might be used for increasing outreach effectiveness.
 - Outreach staff report they are noticing more subsistence anglers during weekdays vs more catch and release anglers during weekends; but EPA is not currently able to quantify this in the data- *feedback on whether outreach staff should add field for catch and release to the field forms is an FCEC action item - EPA will follow up with everyone via email for FCEC input.*
 - Began using the standardized evaluation categories for pier signage conditions and recommendations.
 - Transitioning to electronic outreach forms for pier angler outreach is recommended to ensure standardized consistency; *this is an action item - EPA will follow up with everyone via email for FCEC input.*
 - 37 remaining DNC signs present out of 46 sign locations as of July 2024
 - 6 in good condition
 - 6 in decent condition
 - 16 in fair condition
 - 9 in poor condition
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Pier Outreach Q&A

Renee (EPA) question for Cabrillo:

Q: Have you noticed more new anglers?

A: Yes - although variable on weekends. Most regulars stick to weekdays

CDFW question for Pier Outreach Entities:

Q: CDFW (Dan) asked about level of trust for the reported handling of fish (as release or consumption).

A: EA (Evana) provided that one of the goals of building a rapport with anglers is to help with this kind of consideration for all data collected, and this highlights why the public's separation of the IC Program's enforcement and pier angler outreach components is important: *effective pier outreach relies on anglers not feeling that Cabrillo or DBS&A staff are enforcement-related personnel, and instead are educators.*

Discussion Re - sharks:

Heather (DBS&A) relays anglers have expressed an interest in catching sharks (and the subsequent contamination concerns surrounding shark).

Evana (EA) adds that since it seems that anglers request information specific to sharks and rays, having some content/information on these would be helpful for the outreach educators to share. Asked if there might be available content on risks of shark/ray consumption that could be used during outreach to ensure consistent FCEC/EPA information is shared across anglers and outreach staff.

Linda (USC) adds that sharks have been a historical problem for anglers and swimmers. Invites FCEC to connect with Chris Lowe, director of Shark Lab at California State University, Long Beach, for more information.

4. Enforcement Outreach Update (Lt. Michael Vicknair, CDFW)

- August 2023 through July 2024
- 86 recreational patrols
- 1,712 total contacts
- 57 white croakers observed in 6 inspections
- No white croaker-related citations issued. No white croakers seized.
- No warnings issued pertaining to DNC fish
- Warnings are typically minor violations (for example - the wrong stamp on a license)
- Lobster violations issued
- 831 tip-cards distributed in 79% of inspections, including English (77%), Spanish (30%), Chinese (7%), Vietnamese (4%)

Enforcement Q&A

Evana (EA) question for Lt. Vicknair:



Q: Are lobster fishers (including especially anglers fishing via kayak while lobster hoops soak) part of the enforcement outreach for recreational anglers/ considered boat-based fishing for enforcement purposes?

A: Fishing from kayaks/surfboards/any vessel on the water is considered a vessel/boat and are treated as such during CDFW enforcement outreach. CDFW conducts outreach to both boat and shore anglers during enforcement inspections. People fishing from any vessel require a permit.

5. Community Outreach Update

Renee Jordan Ward (EPA) provided an overview for outreach events conducted by DBS&A, BPSOS, and CCHC.

- Limited awareness of contamination was reported by attendees.
- Outreach partners attended 15 community events (7 since last FCEC meeting)
 - ~102,095 people attended these events~4,096 people interacted with the FCEC booth.
 - Public engagement and distributed materials included:
 - 1,814 Tip Cards
 - 1,439 Brochures
 - 1,011 Comic Books
 - 1,787 Fish ID Cards
 - 15 Curriculum Guides
 - 1,438 attendees provided contact information.
- Overall new QR code appears to be more effective than printed newsletter signup sheet.
- Improvements to the fishing game has improved public interaction.

Heather Hackstedde (DBS&A):

- 3 outreach events since April 2024:
 - Aquarium of the Pacific –Earth Day Teen Climate Fest, April 27, 2024
 - LA County Parks and Recreation –A Day in Nature Festival, September 7, 2024
 - Aquarium of the Pacific –Baja Splash Cultural Festival, September 21-22, 2024
 - Observations:
 - QR code for sign in sheet is being utilized.
 - Distribution of virtual information is being shared by community members to anglers through the QR code/PV Shelf website
 - Chinese and Spanish Fish ID cards do not display warning exclamation symbols on “do not consume” fish.
 - Bait shop outreach conducted as follows:
 - 40 active bait shops
 - Bait shops at piers are not currently included in bait shop outreach. Including these shops during angler outreach may be beneficial to community awareness.
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Hang Nguyen (BPSOS)

- Four outreach events have been held since April 2024, as follows:
 - Garden Grove Police Department–National Night Out, August 6, 2024
 - Central-West County–Health Expo–September 7, 2024
 - Nhan Hoa Health Center–Health Fair–October 5, 2024
 - Clinton Corner Family Campus–Resources and Health Fair–October 9, 2024
- Observations:
 - QR code for sign in sheet is being utilized, but older folks require some help on how to use QR codes.

Shelly Chen (CCHC)

- One outreach event since April 2024:
 - CCHC–Walkathon and Carnival–April 13, 2024
- Observations:
 - The suggested way of eating only the fillet was readily received by younger Asian attendees.
 - Many attendees stated that they did not go fishing but were still interested in the source of contamination and how to protect themselves.
 - QR codes and other digital materials are shared with event attendees, but older folks require some help on how to access, and especially how to use, QR codes.

LACDPH Update (Alberto)

- LACDPH rejoining FCEC with the July 2024 grant awarded
 - Task 1: Public Health Nurse (PHN) Orientation (Ongoing)
 - Presentation to newly hired nurses at orientation - September 25, 2024
 - Provide educational resources for PHNs to distribute to patients and other interested community members
 - Task 2: Public Information Clearinghouse (Ongoing)
 - Maintain and update LACDPH’s Fish Contamination website
<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/Eh/safety/fish-contamination.htm>
 - Fill requests for outreach materials
 - Task 3: Pier Signage (Ongoing)
 - New pier signs ordered
 - Plan to install and maintain pier signs in Los Angeles County, including the following piers: Ballona South, Cabrillo Pier, Dockweiler State Beach, El Segundo Beach (jetty), Hermosa Beach Pier, Manhattan Beach Pier, Marina Del Rey Pier, Playa Del Rey Beach, Redondo Beach Pier, Rocky Point, Royal Palms/White’s Point, Santa Monica Pier, Torrance Beach, Venice Pier
 - Marina Del Rey signs may no longer be relevant due to new construction in the area
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- Task 4: Outreach to Healthcare Providers
 - Offer outreach to medical providers (targeting obstetric and pediatric providers)
 - Coordinate with nurses in the Child Health and Disability Program
 - Provide educational materials to community health clinics
 - Outreach to WIC centers
 - Participate in community public health outreach events
 - Distribute community toolkit to providers

Community Outreach Q&A

Linda (USC) question for Renee:

Q: Are there alternate locations proposed for pier signage?

A: Yes - EPA is considering recommendations provided by FCEC members.

6. Program Proposals and FCEC Requests

- Renee Jordan Ward (EPA) provided an overview for program proposals and action items
 - Prioritize installation of new DNC signs at 9 outreach piers
 - Request for FCEC members to provide feedback on pier sign locations for new signage based on 2023-2024 DNC Annual report
 - For example, removing signs at El Porto/El Segundo
- Request for FCEC members to provide feedback on Data Collection Methods:
 - Proposed transition to electronic data collection for angler outreach tally sheets (using tablets).
 - Proposed addition of catch and release question to angler outreach tally sheet.
 - Request for FCEC members to provide feedback and recommendations on new angler outreach schedule (varying days and times to reach more anglers and determine when there is higher angler activity).
- 2023-2024 Annual Reports will be posted to pvsfish.org

7. Open Forum

Q: Dan (CDFW) Is kingfish/tomcod synonym for white croaker (English tip card has all three names listed, however these fish are not the same); Found a source that says Tomcod have an enzyme that prevent accumulation of PCBs.

A: Renee (EPA) - Common names known to anglers were selected for the tip card based on catch reports. Would like to look into the PCB accumulation topic for Tomcod (which species).

A: Bayne (Cabrillo) - Anglers have their own common names for certain fish and are known to mis-characterized fish (for example - calling scorpionfish a sculpin, etc.)

Q: Zoe (HTB) Are there plans to translate material into Cambodian language?

A: Renee (EPA) - An in-depth analysis of demographics has been conducted to determine which languages are appropriate. The upcoming Community Involvement Plan should provide more data regarding which communities will benefit from materials translation; electronic angler outreach forms will allow for more in-depth analyses of languages.



8. Adjournment