Welcome and thank you for standing by. Today’s call is being recorded; if you have objections you may disconnect at this time. All participants are in the listen-only mode until the public comments section of today’s conference. At that time you may press star one on your phone to make a public comment. I would like to turn the call over to your host, Jeff Bash. You may begin.

Jeff bash: Thank you. Hello and welcome everyone. Thank you for taking the time to join us today. I’m Jeff Bash, the Branch Chief for Policy and Planning in the NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional Office in Seattle, Washington.

NOAA Fisheries is responsible for the stewardship of the nation’s ocean resources and marine habitats. We provide vital services for the nation: productive and sustainable fisheries, safe sources of seafood, the recovery and conservation of protected resources, and healthy ecosystems—all backed by sound science and an ecosystem-based approach to management.

To achieve this mission, fairness, diversity, and inclusion need to be valued in our work. Our work is more productive and innovative when there is a diversity of skills, ideas, and experiences that reflect the stakeholder communities we serve.

On May 23, 2022, NOAA Fisheries published a Notice of Intent to Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Identification of one or more Aquaculture Opportunity Area(s) in Southern California. The Notice of Intent started the public scoping process for identifying AOAs in this region, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, or “NEPA.” The environmental review process under NEPA provides an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to get involved in a Federal agency’s decision-making process.

The goal of this meeting is to hear from you! This is reserved time for you to help the agency identify issues that should be considered and to provide recommendations. The purpose of public scoping is to assist us in defining the topics that should be addressed in the analyses in the PEIS.
We've tried to incorporate answers to some of the questions we've been hearing into our presentation; but in order to maximize the time we have to gather your input, we will not be responding directly to comments today or having a question and answer session.

Today's meeting is the first opportunity for public and stakeholder feedback on topics that relate to offshore aquaculture, specifically in the area we will describe in Southern California. We will spend about 30 minutes getting familiar with the information, and then we will open the phone lines for public comment.

We look forward to your input and unique perspectives during this AOA planning process.

Now I will hand it over to our Regional Aquaculture Coordinator and Project Lead for the Southern California AOA, Diane Windham. Thank you.

Diane Windham: Thank you, Jeff. Hello everyone, I’m Diane Windham, the NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional Aquaculture Coordinator for California, based in our Long Beach, California office. I am also the Regional Lead for the process to identify Aquaculture Opportunity Areas in Southern California.

As a reminder to everyone, this meeting is being recorded, and will be part of the administrative record for the AOA programmatic environmental impact statement, or “PEIS.” If you have any objections to being recorded, you may disconnect at this time. This call will be listen-only until we open the queue for comments after the presentation.

Transcripts and recordings of this meeting will be available on the Southern California AOA website. You can scan the QR code on the screen with any smartphone camera to go to the website. The URL is also provided below the QR code.

Today we will spend a few minutes going over background information on aquaculture, in case the industry or the idea of an AOA is new to you.

After the background information, we will go over the details related to NEPA that were provided in the Notice of Intent on May 23rd.

The purpose of our meeting today is public scoping; to provide you with some of the specific information needs that NOAA Fisheries is seeking to help inform the NEPA environmental review -- review for AOAs in Southern California.

At the end of the presentation, we will remind you of the dates, times, and ways to provide public comments during the public scoping period. You will then be given instructions for getting into the queue to provide oral comments today. There will be a three minute limit for oral comments.
If offshore marine aquaculture is new to you, there are a few definitions to know:

Offshore marine aquaculture is one of many types of aquaculture. It is considered as the cultivation of marine organisms in open ocean waters. In this AOA identification process, it is focused in Federal Waters of the United States exclusive economic zone, or the EEZ, offshore of Southern California. When we say aquaculture, we mean: the breeding, growing, and harvesting of aquatic species in a controlled or selected environment. Aquatic species include fish, shellfish, and plants that live in any water environment like ponds, rivers, lakes, or (in this case) the marine environment - the ocean.

Any aquaculture operation needs to obtain permits from agencies who are responsible for various authorities that apply to aquaculture and the marine environment.

The demand for seafood is growing in the world and in the United States, as the population grows. Seafood is a safe, nutritious source of protein for consumers, but wild-caught fisheries alone may not meet the demand. The global level of wild-caught fisheries has been relatively stable for – or, steady – for the last 20 years. It is currently estimated that the United States imports 70 to 85 percent of the seafood we eat, and about half of that seafood comes from aquaculture in other countries.

Currently, aquaculture facilities in the U.S. are located on land (such as fish hatcheries) and in coastal or nearshore, state waters (such as oyster or abalone farms). There are also some offshore – offshore aquaculture facilities located offshore that are research-focused, and just one commercial shellfish farm is permitted in U.S. federal waters off of San Pedro, California. Growing the industry of offshore marine aquaculture could be another way for the U.S. to source its seafood, in addition to wild-caught seafood or existing near-shore aquaculture.

To give you some background on the Executive Order, on May 7, 2020, the White House issued an Executive Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

Section 7 of the Executive Order, entitled, “Aquaculture Opportunity Areas,” requires the Secretary of Commerce to identify geographic areas that contain locations potentially suitable for commercial aquaculture, and to complete a NEPA Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for each area. The PEIS will assess the potential impacts of siting aquaculture facilities in an AOA.

NOAA selected federal waters in Southern California as one of the first two regions for potential AOAs and NEPA review.
What is an AOA? An AOA is considered to be a defined geographic area that has been evaluated to determine its potential suitability for commercial aquaculture.

An AOA is a planning initiative only and does not propose any aquaculture facilities or permits.

AOAs identified through this process would be considered potentially suitable for finfish, shellfish, macroalgae, or multi-species aquaculture.

NOAA Fisheries will use a combination of scientific analysis and public engagement to identify AOAs. As a reminder, an AOA is NOT an AOA until the PEIS is written and the NEPA analysis is complete!

The goal of identifying AOAs is to promote American seafood competitiveness and economic growth, while balancing economic opportunity with environmental responsibility; to plan aquaculture in a way that minimizes impacts and reduces user conflicts; to increase safe and secure access to sustainable and nutritious protein; and to support the facilitation of the development of domestic aquaculture – commercial aquaculture, consistent with sustaining and conserving marine resources under applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

So what has happened since the Executive Order was published in May of 2020?

Multiple offices within NOAA have been working on the directives from the Executive Order over the last two years. As stated on the previous slide, NOAA selected Southern California as one of the first two regions to be analyzed for potential AOAs. The other region, which is going under this process at the same time as Southern California, is the Gulf of Mexico.

A request for information was published in October of 2020 to seek more information from the public for the first two regions, as well as possible regions in the U.S. that could potentially be selected in the future.

At the same time, the National Center for Coastal Ocean Science, or “NCCOS,” worked with the regional offices in Southern California and in the Gulf of Mexico to collect data for a spatial modeling analysis for each region. The spatial analysis process was meant to assist agency decision makers in identifying areas that may be suitable for locating AOAs, as mandated by the Executive Order. The work by NCCOS resulted in a peer-reviewed technical memorandum published in 2021, entitled, “An Aquaculture Opportunity Area Atlas for the Southern California Bight.” A link to the Atlas is available on the Southern California AOA website.

The Atlas is one source of information to assist NOAA Fisheries in identifying AOAs. Through 2021, and Winter and Spring of 2022, NOAA Fisheries used the results in the Atlas, along with the public input gathered through the request for information and stakeholder engagement to develop the Notice of Intent for the PEIS.
With the publication of the Notice of Intent, NOAA Fisheries initiated the NEPA process for AOAs in Southern California. The NEPA scoping and public comment period on the notice of intent continues through July 22.

NEPA was signed into law on January 1, 1970. It is a procedural statute intended to ensure Federal agencies consider the environmental impacts of their actions in the decision-making process.

Using the NEPA process, federal agencies consider both the beneficial, or good, and adverse, or bad, potential impacts to the ecological and socioeconomic environment; to natural, cultural, and historic resources; as well as impacts to public health and safety, climate change, environmental justice communities, and cumulative impacts.

Agencies are required to invite participation for public review and provide opportunities for public comment on impact evaluations. The first opportunity for public review and comment is during Public Scoping. Scoping is defined in NEPA as an early and open process involving interested and affected parties to determine the scope of issues for analysis.

Scope is defined in NEPA as the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an environmental impact statement.

A PEIS is a broad, or high level, NEPA document that assesses the impacts of a proposed action.

A PEIS is often used when an agency plans new policies or programs that may include actions occurring in the same region; common subject matter and methods of implementation; or if a plan encompasses potential future NEPA assessments that would all have similar impacts but with a narrower scope, such as a project-specific, or site-specific, assessment.

The programmatic analysis may be used to inform NEPA processes for individual projects proposed later in time. And, a PEIS can help eliminate repetitive discussions of the same issues.

Just like a regular environmental impact statement, a PEIS considers a range of alternatives for the proposed action, including a No Action alternative. It undergoes the same public review process, and is shaped by public and stakeholder input.

The federal action proposed in the PEIS that NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region would identify one or more locations that may be suitable for multiple offshore aquaculture projects in Federal waters of the Southern California Bight, and to evaluate the impacts of siting aquaculture in those locations.
Shown on the map, the Southern California Bight is considered as the marine space within the U.S. EEZ associated with the coastline between Point Conception and the U.S./Mexico border, and encompassing the Channel Islands.

The PEIS will assess geographically discrete areas only within Federal waters (so outside of State waters) within the U.S. EEZ that would be suitable to site future aquaculture development.

AOAs identified through this process would be considered potentially suitable for finfish, shellfish, macroalgae, or multi-species aquaculture.

The proposed action is a long-term planning effort. It is not a regulatory or permitting action. The analysis may be used to inform such processes for individual projects proposed later in time.

The purpose of the proposed action is to apply a science-based approach to identify AOAs in Federal waters.

The proposed action is needed to meet the directions of Executive Order 13921 to address the increasing demand for seafood, facilitate long-term planning for marine aquaculture development, and address interests and concerns regarding offshore marine aquaculture siting.

The dots shown on the map represent options for where AOA – or excuse me where NOAA may identify AOAs off the coast of Southern California. This figure is from the NCCOS Aquaculture Atlas. While the marine spatial planning – marine spatial modeling process in the Atlas included Federal waters in the entire Southern California Bight ecoregion, the AOA PEIS will focus on Federal waters in the northern and central part of the Bight, near the Santa Barbara Channel and Santa Monica Bay.

This narrowed-down area of interest is thought to have the most potential to be suitable for all types of aquaculture development, including the cultivation of finfish, macroalgae, shellfish, or a combination of species.

You can scan the QR code in the upper righthand corner of your screen, labeled, “NCCOS SoCal Atlas Website,” to download the Atlas. The QR code on the bottom right corner of your screen, labeled, “NOAA Fisheries SoCal AOA Website” will take you to our regional AOA landing page, where a link to the Atlas is also provided.

While these options and the preliminary area of interest are based on NOAA’s stakeholder engagement and the science-based, uh geo-planning information in the Atlas, it does not reflect a decision by the agency – or any agency to identify specific AOAs. AOAs would be identified only through the NEPA process.

The PEIS will consider the following range of alternatives within the area of interest.
Alternative 1 is the No Action Alternative, in which no AOA would be identified in Federal waters offshore of Southern California, even after the PEIS was written.

In Alternative 2, NOAA Fisheries would identify one or more AOAs from selected site options in Federal waters in the Santa Barbara Channel.

Alternative 3: NOAA Fisheries would identify one or more AOAs from selected site options in Federal waters in Santa Monica Bay; and in Alternative 4, NOAA Fisheries would identify one or more AOAs in either or both Santa Monica Bay and the Santa Barbara Channel.

For Alternative 2, the Santa Barbara Channel, there are eight selected site options, shown as boxes within the boundaries of the preliminary area of interest in the Santa Barbara Channel.

In Alternative 2, NOAA Fisheries would identify at least one and up to eight AOAs within the boundaries of selected site options. The sites are located between 10.02 and 19.72 kilometers (the equivalent of 5.41 and 10.65 nautical miles) offshore of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

Alternative 3 for Santa Monica Bay: there are two selected site options in Alternative 3, shown as boxes within the boundaries of the preliminary area of interest in Santa Monica Bay.

In Alternative 3, NOAA Fisheries would identify at least one and up to two AOAs from within the boundaries of selected site options. The sites are located between 8.06 and 8.82 kilometers (or the equivalent to 4.35 and 4.76 nautical miles) offshore of Los Angeles County.

Again, these alternative descriptions are preliminary and do not reflect any agency decision. Based on the input received during public scoping, we may analyze more or fewer alternatives in the Draft PEIS.

Consistent with Executive Order 13921, NOAA is designated as the lead agency for the proposed action. The West Coast Region invited the EPA Region 9, the U.S. Coast Guard District Eleven, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District to act as cooperating agencies for the purposes of the PEIS. EPA, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have agreed to act as cooperating agencies. We thank these agencies and our other federal partners for their coordination in this planning effort.

For the timeline, we will spend this summer in the public scoping period of NEPA. All public comments, written and oral, will be reviewed to develop the PEIS through the rest of 2022. We expect the draft PEIS to be available to the public on or around Fall of 2023.
Important Dates: the public scoping period continues through July 22. You will have two opportunities to submit oral public comment, either at this meeting today, or at the next meeting on July 11. The meeting on July 11 will happen from 5 to 7 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

You may also submit written public comments on Regulations.gov. The QR code and the URL address for Regulations.gov is provided on the screen.

As a reminder, Regulations.gov is maintained on the east coast time. Midnight on the east coast is 9 p.m. on the west coast. That means ALL comments need to be submitted before 8:59 p.m., Pacific Standard Time.

If you have questions on how to comment or access information about AOAs, you can email socalaoa.west coast --.wcr@noaa.gov. We are maintaining this email address to help with the NEPA process; it is not meant to answer questions specific to the contents of the environmental process.

Regarding informational needs, public participation will help shape the AOA planning process. The PEIS will analyze potential impacts to the environment and – that may occur should projects be proposed in one or more of the AOAs, if identified. Through public scoping, we will identify which topics we should focus on in the environmental analysis of the Draft PEIS.

We are seeking your local insight related to the proposed planning action, specifically related to the preliminary alternatives.

Potential impacts associated with pre-construction siting surveys, construction, operations and maintenance, and decommissioning for all types of commercial aquaculture will be consid – will be considered.

Positive and negative impacts will be considered.

If you have information on ways to mitigate, or decrease, negative impacts, we want to know about that too. Ways to mitigate impacts include setting standards for design, construction, or maintenance; monitoring systems and methods; any best management practices that could be applied to offshore commercial aquaculture.

Please refer to the notice of intent for a full list of prompts that were provided to help stimulate feedback related to local resources.

Some of the ecological, historic, or cultural resources we are considering focusing on in the PEIS include: wild fish stocks and Highly Migratory Species; protected species and sensitive habitats; wild-caught commercial and recreational fishing; tourism, shipping, navigation, and other offshore ocean uses; and the relationship of these resources to Climate Change.
Some of the socioeconomic connections we are seeking more information about include: communities that may be affected by offshore aquaculture development. For example, who makes up the working waterfronts in the region? What are the social, cultural, environmental justice, and public health topics that connect those communities to the offshore preliminary alternative areas? For example, what opportunities or demands may arise? How would access to resources change?

We are interested in identifying local community connections to the preliminary alternative areas related social values, traditions, identities, experiences.

We also want to know about consumer perceptions and local percept – perspectives related to aquaculture products and seafood.

If you have any questions about the NEPA process, how to access these presentation files, or how to submit comments, please email: socalaoa.wcr@noaa.gov. You may also refer to the region – regional AOA website for more information.

To maximize the time we have to gather your comments, we will not be responding to comments tonight. This meeting is not a question and answer session. We will be accepting comments on the proposed Federal action, preliminary alternatives, potential impacts to resources, and other topics specific to identifying AOAs in Southern California. We will not be accepting comments on individual permit applications, or the potential for AOAs in other regions outside of Southern California.

I will now hand it over to the operator to begin our public comment session.

Operator: Thank you. At this time if you would like to make a public comment, please ensure that your phone is unmuted, press star one, and record your name clearly when prompted. If you need to withdraw your comment, press star two. Again to make a public comment, please press star one.

One moment to see if we have any comments.

And there are no comments at this time – oh I’m sorry, we did just have a comment come in. One moment please.

And our first comment is from Amy Kraitchman. You may go ahead. Amy, your line is open.

Amy Kraitchman: OK, hi, can you hear me? Um, good afternoon –

Operator: Yes –

Amy Kraitchman: OK. Good afternoon, my name is Amy Kraitchman. I’m a law clerk at Center for Food Safety. CFS has a long had aquaculture program dedicated to addressing the adverse
environmental and public health impacts of industrial aquaculture and improving aquaculture oversight. Thank you for the opportunity today.

First, I want to address that NMFS does not have legal authority to designate this Aquaculture Opportunity Area, as NMFS is aware in 2018, CFS along with other contributions and fishing groups successfully challenged NMFS authority to regulate aquaculture under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. In August 2020, the Fifth Circuit affirmed a lower court’s decision to vacate the nation’s first commercial aquaculture permitting scheme in the Gulf of Mexico. Included as the Magnuson-Stevens Act, unambiguously precluded the agency from creating an aquaculture regime.

Furthermore, the 2020 Executive Order 13921 cannot give NMFS the authority to designate aquaculture when no statutory authority exists. The Executive Order did not specify a statute under which NMFS authority – NMFS has authority.

Even if NMFS has authority to designate Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, industrial offshore aquaculture results in a breadth of economic, environmental impacts which NMFS must address in the programmatic EIS.

Other countries with marine finfish aquaculture have suffered extensive environmental, socioeconomic, and public health problems associated with the industry. For example, as of August 2019, Denmark has placed a prohibition on offshore aquaculture development for entire country out of concern for the industry’s impacts on the environment.

In the U.S., Washington State has phased out marine finfish aquaculture for non-native species, pulling a massive Atlantic salmon spill in August 2017.

Marine finfish aquaculture routinely results in massive number of farmed fish escapes – escapes that adversely affect wild fish stocks. Escaped fish increase competition with wild stocks for food, habitat, and spawning areas.

Moreover, we have significant concern over the pervasive use of antibiotics, herbicides, pesticides, and other veterinary drugs for prevention and treatment of outbreaks in marine finfish aquaculture facilities and how they affect native species and public health.

Lastly, we have concerns about the Atlas’s impact on endangered and threatened species in the area including species such as humpback whales, blue whales, sea turtles, and California sea lions.

ESA regulations state that any request for formal consultation may encompass a number of similar individual actions within a given geographic area or a segment of a non – of a comprehensive plan. This does not relieve the Federal agency of the requirements for considering the effects of an action as a whole. NMFS needs to do
a programmatic ESA consultation prior to finalizing this AOA designation. That’s all thank you.

Operator: Thank you. Next we have Barack Kamelgard. You may go ahead.

Barack Kamelgard: Hi, can you hear me?

Operator: Yes we can.

Barack Kamelgard: Alright. Great. Um, I’m going to keep my comments brief. Uh, there are su – Los Angeles Water Keeper, uh, protects the LA County coastline and waters off the coastline and we have concerns with the identification for two of the locations in Santa Monica Bay.

Uh, as you should be aware, there has been a lot of focus on the DDT that was found at the bottom of Santa Monica Bay, that is currently being dealt with and would have impacts on any fish, shellfish, or other aquaculture in Santa Monica Bay, as well as the ecosystem which I want to make sure is clear is not limited only to aquatic animals but also coastal and marine birds in the area. As a study recently found, that coastal California condors exhibit a high level of DDT.

Additionally there have been, along the Southern California Bight, several major sewage and oil spills in the last several years that would affect any operations in the area and those are not adequately controlled and could be by any remediation measures.

Additionally, there are several Marine Protected Areas recognized within the area that would be affected by any operations in these locations.

And finally, to the extent that any operations – aquaculture operations were approved in the area, they should not solely be for finfish. If anything, there should be no finfish at all. But at a minimum, if there are certain finfish there need to be uses of innovative treatment options in addition to normal ones such as using shellfish being farmed as bioremediation along with adequate controls on those as well.

Um, and otherwise I’ll have my comments reflected in my written comments. Thank you.

Operator: Thank you. There are no further questions at this time, but as a reminder, please press star followed by one if you’d like to make a public comment.

One moment to see if there’s any further comments. And one moment please.

Next, we have Kim Selkoe. You may go ahead.

Kim Selkoe: Hi this is Kim Selkoe from Commercial Fisherman of Santa Barbara, a 501(c)(3) uh, port association representing all commercial fisheries in our port and I will make a
more extensive written comment, but I just wanted to um, register today that our organization is adamantly against any finfish aquaculture in Federal waters off of California. Our waters are some of the most productive and biodiverse for finfish wild-capture fisheries for the nation, and we see any finfish aquaculture as severely putting that um, sustainable and thriving industry at risk. Um, and we hope that um, there will be a chance to engage further to um, back that up with more um, evidence and uh, debate about how to keep finfish aquaculture out of our waters. Thank you.

Operator: Thank you, at this time there are no further comments.

Diane Windham: And just a reminder for folks, uh, if you do wish to comment, please press star one on your phone and that will get you in the queue.

Operator: And one moment to see if there’s any further comments. One moment please.

And next we have Kim Thompson. You may go ahead.

Kim Thompson: Hi thank you. Um, my name is Kim Thompson. I’m the Director of Seafood for the Future at the Aquarium of the Pacific, um, and I just want to um, comment in terms of context and how all of these important issues are going to be addressed. It’s very important to understand those local impacts, and those stakeholders who are going to be directly impacted, but it’s also important to understand that larger context and the other systems in which these um, the farms will operate, which is our food production systems.

So to the extent practicable, it would be really helpful um, for this uh, environmental impact review to factor in the role that these farms would play in local, state, and also global food production, and California’s role in that food production.

Um, and that’s going to be really important for us to be able to make those uh, trade-off and value judgements, not just again with those local impacts, and those important impacts that it might have to those um, those local stakeholders, but also to society and the environment at large. Thank you.

Operator: Thank you. Next we have Chris Voss. You may go ahead.

Chris Voss: Yea hi my name is Chris Voss and I’m the president of Commercial Fisherman of Santa Barbara. Are you able to hear me?

Diane Windham: Yes, we can hear you.
Chris Voss: OK. Thank you. Um, my comment just has to do with uh, the uh, the impacts to commercial fisheries from a variety of offshore leasing and uh, the initiative – the 30 initiative that’s being proposed.

We’re uh, um, expecting to lose um, considerable area over time moving forward due to offshore wind and open ocean aquaculture, as well as increased conservation efforts that are anticipated to take additional space away, so what that does is it concentrates our activities into a smaller and smaller area, as well as confounding the efforts that uh, marine resource managers like the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and the Department of Fish and Wildlife um, pursue in their efforts to sustainably manage the resources that are wildly harvested from the marine environment.

So, the challenges associated with the AOA and all of the other spatial impacts, the industrialization of the um, the Federal waters uh, is just uh, something that um, the commercial fishing community opposes and uh, we’ll struggle desperately with um, in relationship to our efforts to uh, continue to be successful in our ports. Thank you very much.

Operator: Thank you. And just as a reminder that is star followed by one, if you’d like to make a comment.

Next we Tyler Buckingham. You may go ahead.

Tyler Buckingham: Yes hi. Well uh, I will also be submitting uh, some written comments, but I just have to start off by saying thank you for all the work that is being done to advance uh, this AOA process to here, and I’m excited to see what the process yields.

Um, my day job right now, I’m a journalist and I cover the American shoreline and I talk about aquaculture all the time with people. And I – it’s just incredible how excited uh, people are like, you know even older people, are really excited at the idea of sustainability. Uh, particularly in Ventura County, where uh, sustainability is on peoples’ minds every day. With the water issue, uh, with the increasing heat and temperature, uh, fire threat, uh, people are increasingly thinking about their footprint and where their food comes from.

And uh, in the process of learning about all of this, I thought you know, I – I could – I would want nothing more than to participate in this business. So I’m trying to start a little mussel – kelp and mussel company, and I’ve been following along in this process. And all I would say is my official comment is, I’m trying to do a small, 200-acre thing out of Ventura Harbor, and I would hope that other people like me can do this too. And that we can be a new working waterfront and create jobs and uh, protect that kind of cultural integrity, and protect the environment, and do it all. I think that’s possible and we can be sustainable and produce excellent food and excellent energy. Um, thank you very much, and that’s my comment.
Operator: Thank you. At this time there are no further public comments. As a reminder, if you’d like to make a comment, please press start followed by one. One moment to see if we have any further comments.

And there are no further comments at this time.

Diane Windham: If you’re just tuning in and you wish to provide public comment, please press star one to get in the queue.

Operator: And there are still no additional public comments. Again that is star followed by one, if you’d like to make a comment.

And there are still no public comments at this time.

Diane Windham: Just a reminder if you’re just tuning in, please press star one to join the queue for public comment.

Operator: And there are no uh, further comments at this time. Again that is star, followed by one to join the – to ask a comment.

Diane Windham: If you’re just joining us, uh, we just finished up with the slide presentation and we are still accepting public comment. You can press star one on your phone to join the commenting queue.

Operator: And again, as a reminder, if you’d like to make a comment please press star followed by one. And one moment please.

And next we have Amalia Almada, you may go ahead.

Amalia Almada: Hi this is Amalia. I’m from the University of Southern California SeaGrant Program. I was just trying to scroll through the Aquaculture Atlas quickly, but my thought was whether it would be helpful on these listening sessions or elsewhere on the, um, NOI site, to kind of have maps that are collocating some of these issues that have come up around where commercial fisheries are now, kind of in the Santa Barbara basin, where they’re kind of thought to be restricted at this point, and even for um, you know the Santa Monica Bay area too, kind of where those outfalls are from Hyperion and elsewhere that’s relevant, as well as some of the DDT uh, collocated sites. Just so we have a visual, we’re all on the same page about kind of where these locations are, um, and how it relates to AOAs. I think as a visual person that would be helpful, for me at the very least too, and potentially for others. But thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Operator: Thank you. And currently there are no further comments. Again please press star one if you’d like to join the queue to comment.
If you’re just tuning in, uh, we’ve already completed the visual presentation but we are accepting public comment. If you wish to make a comment please press star one on your phone to get in the queue.

Operator: And again if you’d like to make a comment please press star followed by one.

And just as a reminder, if you’d like to ask uh, or – make a comment please press star followed by one.

If you’re just tuning in, please press star one if you’d like to make a comment and that will get you in the queue to comment. Thank you.

Operator: And as a reminder, if you’d like to make a – a comment, please press star followed by one.

Just a reminder if you’re just joining us, we are still here, and if you’re interested in providing a comment, please press star one on your phone to get in the queue.

Operator: And as a reminder, if you’d like to make a public comment please press star followed by one.

If you’re just tuning in, we did already complete the power point presentation, but you’re welcome to submit a public comment orally, and if you wish to do, please press star one on your phone to get in the queue.

Operator: And as a reminder, if you’d like to make a public comment, please press star followed by one.

If you’re just tuning in, we have completed the power point presentation portion of this scoping meeting, and if you would like to leave a public comment, please press star one on your phone to get in the queue. Thank you.

Operator: And just a reminder, if you’d like to make a public comment, please press star followed by one.

And just a reminder, if you’d like to make a public comment, please press star followed by one.

If you’re just tuning in, we are still accepting public comment on the Southern California Aquaculture Opportunity Areas. If you are interested in submitting a comment, we will be accepting those comments for another half hour, until 2 p.m. Pacific, and to leave a comment, please press star and then one on your phone, and that will get you in the queue to provide comment. Thank you.

Operator: As a reminder, if you would like to make a public comment, please press star one.
If you’re just tuning in, we are still here and receiving public comment. If you wish to leave a public comment, please press star, then one, and that will get you in the queue. Thank you.

If you wish to leave a comment, please press star one on your phone to get in the queue.

As a reminder, to make a public comment, please press star one on your phone, and to make a public comment please press star one on your phone.

So folks, we have a little over five minutes remaining in this public scoping session. If you’re interested in providing an oral comment, please press star and then one on your phone to get in the queue.

Alright everyone, well we are fast approaching the top of the hour in our allotted time for this public working session. Thank you for your time and participation.

This concludes our first public scoping meeting for the Notice of Intent to Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Identification of one or more Aquaculture Opportunity Area(s) in Southern California. There will be another public scoping meeting on July 11th from 5 to 7 p.m. The same information that you saw today will be presented on July 11th, and we will hold another oral public comment session at that time. Log-in information is available on the AOA website, and, we just want to thank you all for your time and participation today, and, um, we have about two minutes until – one minute until uh, the end of the time, so I’ll hand it back over to the operator. And, thank you all once again.

Thank you for your participation in today’s conference. You may disconnect at this time. Speakers.