



PMEP COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK 2021-2022¹

Introduction

The Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership (PMEP) is one of 20 fish habitat partnerships in the United States formed to conserve and restore healthy native fish populations. PMEP's focus is on providing science, data, and funding to conserve and restore nearshore and estuarine fish habitats in California, Oregon, and Washington with a particular focus on multi-species and juvenile rearing habitat protection.

The PMEP adopted a five-year [Strategic Plan for 2018-2022](#) which identifies five overarching goals. Each year, PMEP develops an annual workplan to guide its work for the year. The workplan actions align with its strategic goals and include communications and outreach activities. This Communications Framework outlines how PMEP communications and outreach actions should be approached. It identifies objectives which are further articulated in the strategic plan. The framework identifies the target audience for PMEP communications, key messages that can consistently be incorporated into communications, and general strategies to employ to achieve its communications objectives. The framework is designed to be incorporated into PMEP's Strategic Plan and to be updated at least every five years when the strategic plan is updated. This framework can be updated more frequently if necessary to reflect changing priorities.

PMEP Vision and Mission

Our vision is for California, Oregon, and Washington to have functional, resilient estuarine and nearshore marine ecosystems that support healthy native fish populations.

Our mission is to provide science, data, and funding to conserve and restore West Coast nearshore and estuarine fish habitat.

We accomplish this mission as follows:

¹ Designed to be revised at the same time the Strategic Plan will be revised.

1. PMEP supports multi-species habitat protection and restoration efforts in Pacific estuarine and nearshore areas and helps advance region-wide priorities in those environments. PMEP works in a complementary and collaborative fashion with the many existing partners targeting estuarine and nearshore habitats along the Pacific Coast, as well as larger-scale regional initiatives.
2. PMEP gathers the expertise of local, state, national, and tribal governments, nonprofits and other private organizations, and academia in order to synthesize the best available information to assist efforts to protect and restore native fish habitat along the West Coast.
3. PMEP works to develop and compile new datasets to fill high-priority data gaps in our understanding of West Coast native fish habitat.
4. PMEP provides, in collaboration with its members and partners, targeted restoration and conservation funding to support on-the-ground work.

Communications Objectives, Target Audiences, Messages, and Strategies

Objectives

PMEP identified the following communications objectives that align with the goals identified in its strategic plan:

- Increase the use of PMEP products, tools and assessments to improve conservation and restoration along the West Coast.
- Build diverse partnerships and membership on PMEP Steering Committee and associated sub-committees and workgroups.
- Improve the quality and quantity of proposals received for PMEP funding.
- Integrate PMEP's approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into its communications.

Target Audiences

The audiences to be targeted to achieve these objectives are:

- Restoration and conservation practitioners and planners,
- Researchers, and
- Natural Resource agency personnel.

Messages

The following key messages can be used consistently throughout PMEP communications materials and outreach.

- PMEP annually provides funding for on-the-ground restoration projects that achieve measurable restoration and conservation of fish habitat along the west coast. PMEP encourages projects that benefit to multiple non-salmonid species as well as salmonids.
- PMEP committees are the means of achieving collaborative decision-making and eliciting expert advice on PMEP products and actions. PMEP must ensure that each subcommittee and working group has the support necessary to be effective.
- PMEP's geographic scope encompasses coastal draining watersheds along the U.S. West Coast, extending into the marine waters offshore to a depth of 200 meters.
- With its partners, PMEP identifies key information gaps in the ability to protect and restore west coast fish habitat and strives to fill them. PMEP synthesizes the best available information including compiling datasets that enhance our understanding of this habitat.
- PMEP has gathered and synthesized existing estuary fish use and habitat conditions, eelgrass information, and tidal restoration data into online tools to allow for comparisons across the region. These datasets provide information that managers can use to make informed decisions.
- PMEP's data tools can be used to understand fish habitat response and adaptation to climate/ocean change.
- PMEP identifies key gaps in the knowledge of west coast fish habitat and seeks to fill those gaps collaboratively through support for partner projects and independent research, and assessments.
- PMEP works in a complementary and collaborative fashion with its many existing partners to advance region-wide priorities through federal, state, and local-level actions.
- PMEP partnerships benefit all partners by informing regional priorities, consolidating resources, and focusing on strategic priorities to improve restoration and conservation of estuary, marine and nearshore fish habitats along the west coast.

Strategies

The PMEP Communications objectives can be achieved by employing five strategies:

Conduct outreach at meetings and events

This strategy builds on the current high engagement levels of its partners at national and regional conferences and meetings where members of PMEP identified target audiences congregate. For these events, the effectiveness of the communication increases if PMEP is featured directly on the agenda or in a session.

Execute communications campaigns for new products and tools

PMEP regularly produces fish habitat assessments, reports and data compilations and develops trainings and tools. Developing and executing project-specific communications campaigns will ensure that new products are shared widely and uptake of new information results from PMEP's work.

Support active, effective committee engagement in PMEP activities

PMEP committees are the means of achieving collaborative decision-making and eliciting expert advice on PMEP products and actions. PMEP must ensure that each committee and working group has the support necessary to be effective.

Utilize partner communications networks

PMEP enjoys active involvement from over twenty organizations active in restoration and conservation along the west coast. Each of these organizations has its own communications methods and tools, including electronic newsletters, social media accounts, and blogs. PMEP can capitalize on opportunities to promote PMEP through these partner networks.

Expand PMEP's presence on social media platforms

Today, strategic use of social media platforms to amplify messages and availability of new products is a standard practice while utilization of traditional communication platforms for information (e.g., electronic newsletters and websites) by both core constituents and the public has continued to diminish. PMEP will explore a variety of social media platforms to more effectively support its mission.

Utilize PMEP electronic communications and website

Electronic distribution of a regular PMEP newsletter will increase PMEP's visibility. The newsletter should be linked to the website to drive readers to the website. Updates to data users through electronic notifications should be streamlined. Analytics of how many subscribers open the newsletter and what articles they read will be compiled regularly to assess the newsletter's reach.

The website is currently accessible on multiple platforms and the organization is adequate. The website is the portal to all PMEP's tools and assessments and should be promoted widely. The website will be updated with news and fresh content as often as possible. Website Analytics will be monitored to assess overall website effectiveness.