

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Designated in 1980, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS or Sanctuary) consists of an area of approximately 1110 square nautical miles (nmi)¹ of coastal and ocean waters, and the submerged lands thereunder, off the southern coast of California. The Sanctuary boundary begins at the Mean High Water Line of and extends seaward to a distance of approximately six nmi from the following islands and offshore rocks: San Miguel Island, Santa Cruz Island, Santa Rosa Island, Anacapa Island, Santa Barbara Island, Richardson Rock, and Castle Rock (the Islands).

Located offshore from Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties in southern California, the Sanctuary's primary objective is to conserve, protect, and enhance the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural legacy of marine resources surrounding the Channel Islands for current and future generations. The significance of this objective is underscored by the Sanctuary's rich and diverse range of marine life and habitats, unique and productive oceanographic processes and ecosystems, and culturally significant resources.

This management plan is Volume I of a two-volume set. It contains information about the Sanctuary's environment and resources, staffing and administration, regulations and boundary, operational and programmatic costs, priority management issues and the actions proposed to address them, and performance measures. This management plan represents a major revision of the original 1983 management plan under which the Sanctuary previously operated.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is Volume II of the set. It has been developed in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321-4370 *et seq.*) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), contains detailed information on the greater Sanctuary region, presents a range of alternatives for modified and new Sanctuary regulations, and provides environmental and socioeconomic impact analyses of those alternatives.

The Management Plan

History of the Management Plan Review Process

Although the first national marine sanctuary was designated in 1975, the initiation of the CINMS management plan review in 1998 marked the first formal management plan review of any sanctuary in the National Marine Sanctuary System. CINMS began this process with an internal review of the

¹ From 1980 to 2007, the area of CINMS was described as approximately 1252.5 square nautical miles. However, in 2007 NOAA re-calculated the original CINMS area as approximately 1113 square nautical miles (72 FR 29208). Also in 2007, NOAA designated the federal portion of the Channel Islands MPA network, consisting of eight marine reserves and one marine conservation area within the CINMS (72 FR 29208). The marine reserves are distributed throughout the CINMS and extend slightly beyond the current boundaries of the CINMS in four locations, increasing the overall size of the Sanctuary by approximately 15 square nautical miles. This change allows the boundary of four of the marine reserves to be defined by straight lines projecting outside the original CINMS boundary, allowing for better enforcement of the marine reserves. Adjusting for technical corrections and using updated technologies, NOAA has re-calculated the CINMS area as approximately 1470 square statute miles (1110 square nmi). This change does not constitute a change in the geographic area of the Sanctuary, but rather an improvement in the estimate of its size.

effectiveness of site programs and policies relative to the 1983 management plan's goals and objectives and the purposes and policies of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA). Also in 1998, CINMS formed a Sanctuary Advisory Council (Advisory Council) as a forum through which Sanctuary constituents could provide advice to the Sanctuary Superintendent, including advice on the management plan review.

In the summer of 1999, Sanctuary staff held several public scoping meetings across San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles counties (one meeting was also held in Washington, D.C.). During these meetings, numerous individuals raised a wide range of local, regional and national resource management issues. After reviewing and synthesizing these comments, CINMS and NMSP staff, working closely with the Advisory Council, identified a set of priority resource management issues to be addressed in the new management plan.

Developing the Management Plan

In 2000, CINMS and NMSP headquarters staff began to draft the revised management plan. At the same time, Tetra Tech, Inc. was contracted to begin drafting the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS). Over the next few years, several revisions were made to the draft management plan with periodic input from the Advisory Council. In 2006, NOAA released the draft management plan and DEIS for public review and comment, followed by a Supplemental DEIS (SDEIS) in 2008. NOAA received over 700 comments from agencies, organizations, and individuals during the comment periods. NOAA has addressed all substantive public and agency comments, and where appropriate has revised the management plan and EIS according to responses to comments. Public and agency comments received during the 2006 and 2008 public comment periods, and NOAA's responses to these comments, are provided in Vol. II, Appendix B.

In addition to revising the management plan and EIS per responses to comments, Sanctuary staff have made minor revisions to update outdated information, and to correct minor typographical, technical, and formatting errors. Vol. I, Appendix C and Vol. II, Appendix B contain information about changes made to the management plan and EIS, respectively, between Draft and Final versions.

The foundation of this management plan is the action plans, which detail the management actions (non-regulatory "strategies" and regulations) the Sanctuary will take to address the priority issues and meet the purposes and policies of the NMSA.²

Purpose of This Document

Based on purposes and policies set forward by the NMSA, all thirteen national marine sanctuaries engage in management plan review in order to:

- Evaluate substantive progress toward implementing the management plan and goals, especially the effectiveness of site-specific management techniques and strategies;
- Determine necessary revisions to the management plan; and,
- Prioritize management objectives.

In addition, CINMS recognizes significant advances in science and technology, innovations in marine resource management techniques, and challenging new resource management issues have emerged and, as such, have rendered the original 1983 management plan obsolete. Thus, the management plan revision process is also a vehicle for the Sanctuary to integrate new tools and practices into site management.

² The NMSA can be found online at:

<http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/natprogram/nplegislation/nplegislation.html>.

With this in mind, the purpose of this management plan is twofold: 1) to inform Sanctuary constituents, including the general public, about the Sanctuary and the management actions CINMS has planned for the next five years, and 2) to guide site management toward achievement of the Sanctuary's goals with the best means available.

Organization of this Document

The management plan is organized into four principal sections.

- **Section I** is an introduction presenting background information on the national marine sanctuaries and the management plan review process.
- **Section II** provides context by describing the Sanctuary setting. This section is divided into four sub-sections: II-A) The Physical Setting; II-B) The Biological Setting; II-C) The Human Setting; and II-D) The Operational Setting.
- **Section III** contains the action plans, which detail the management actions the Sanctuary will take to address priority issues and meet the purposes and policies of the NMSA.
- **Section IV** contains a number of appendices, which provide supporting information on various aspects of this management plan.

A summarized list of the management strategies (binned by action plan) found in this management plan is presented on the following page. A more detailed version of this list, which presents information on the status, funding source, level of partnership coordination, and levels of implementation for each strategy can be found in Appendix A1: Action Plan Summary Table.



Figure 1. California brown pelican (Shane Anderson)

Management Strategies By Action Plan

Public Awareness and Understanding Action Plan

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|---|---|
| AU.1 – Education Program Development | AU.6 – Developing Education & Outreach Tools & Products |
| AU.2 – Community Involvement/Volunteer & Intern Program Development | AU.7 – Visitor Center Support & Development |
| AU.3 – Team OCEAN | AU.8 – MPA Network Education |
| AU.4 – Developing Outreach Technology | AU.9 – Multicultural Education |
| AU.5 – Greater Southern California Outreach | |

Conservation Science Action Plan

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|---|--|
| CS.1 – Sanctuary Aerial Monitoring and Spatial Analysis Program | CS.5 – Research Interpretation |
| CS.2 – Comprehensive Data Management | CS.6 – Biological Monitoring of MPA Network |
| CS.3 – Support Monitoring and Site Characterization Programs | CS.7 – Socioeconomic Monitoring of MPA Network |
| CS.4 – Collaborative Marine Research Project | CS.8 – Automated Identification System (AIS) Vessel Tracking |

Boundary Evaluation Action Plan

- BE.1 – Final Determination on Boundary Issue

Water Quality Action Plan

- WQ.1 – Offshore Water Quality Monitoring
WQ.2 – Water Quality Protection Planning

Emergency Response & Enforcement Action Plan

- EE.1 – Emergency Response Planning & Implementation
EE.2 – Expanding Enforcement Efforts

Maritime Heritage Action Plan

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|--|---|
| MH.1 – The Shipwreck Reconnaissance Program | MH.4 – Implementing a Coordinated MHR Protection Outreach Effort |
| MH.2 – MHR Volunteer Program | MH.5 – Upgrading the Maritime Heritage Website |
| MH.3 – Partnering With the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum | MH.6 – Supporting Public Education of Chumash Native American Maritime Heritage |

Resource Protection Action Plan

- RP.1 – Identifying & Assessing Current and Emerging Issues
RP.2 – Responding to Identified Issues
RP.3 – General Marine Zoning

Operations Action Plan

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|--|---|
| OP.1 – Sanctuary Advisory Council Operations | OP.5 – Administrative Initiatives |
| OP.2 – Permitting and Activity Tracking | OP.6 – Human Resources |
| OP.3 – Relationships With Other Authorities | OP.7 – Office Space Expansion |
| OP.4 – Vehicle, Boat & Aircraft Operations | OP.8 – Greening Facilities & Operations |

Performance Evaluation Action Plan

- EV.1 – Measuring Sanctuary Performance Over Time