

NOAA CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

Advisory Council Meeting

Friday, November 17, 2023

9:00am-12:45pm PT

Hybrid Session: Port of Hueneme

Final Key Outcomes

This virtual public Advisory Council meeting was not video or audio recorded.

Please contact Michael Murray (michael.murray@noaa.gov) to request a copy of any presentation slides.

Welcome, Technical Check-in, and Administrative Business

- Council Chair Michael Cohen (Tourism seat member) called the Advisory Council meeting to order, described the purpose and composition of the Advisory Council and its bi-monthly meetings, and provided opening remarks.
- CINMS Deputy Superintendent for Programs, Mike Murray, oriented attendees to the online meeting technology and practices for effective participation.
- Murray confirmed in-person and online attendance, counting the presence of 27 Council members representing 17 out of 26d voting seats (Appendix A). In addition to Council members, several members of the public and sanctuary staff were in attendance both in-person and online.

September 8, 2023 and October 12, 2023 Advisory Council Meeting Draft Key Outcomes

- The Advisory Council approved draft key outcomes from the September 8, 2023 Advisory Council meeting and the October 12, 2023 Advisory Council Special Session. There were no abstentions from the motion.
- A copy of the key outcomes is available upon request to Mike Murray (michael.murray@noaa.gov), and will be posted on the [Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting Notes web page](#) upon finalization.

Council Member Announcements

Council members provided the following announcements:

- Jackie Phelps (California Coastal Commission alternate) shared the [Local Assistance Grant Program](#) is providing funding for climate resilience efforts.
- Kevin Brannon (Recreational Fishing alternate) shared that he attended a presentation by Joe Forrest about the Santa Rosa Research Station and the partnership with the Santa Barbara Zoo.

- Jaime Diamond (Business seat alternate) announced that the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area is officially designated. She noted that the designation is a win for whales and is good for business.
- Michael Cohen (Tourism seat member) shared his company is wrapping up the field season at the Channel Islands. He noted there was a strong presence at Santa Cruz Island and families are increasingly including outdoor activities in their holidays.
- Mike Nelson (Commercial Fishing seat member) thanked the University of Santa Barbara Bren School graduate students for their dedication to the Mock SAC meeting. He shared that the Board of Trustees of the Santa Barbara Community College executed an agreement with the Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara to move forward with the development of a program to bring together industry and academia to develop an ocean careers initiative and workforce development funding. He shared they will be applying for a Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant to set up the program.
- David Lopez (Recreational Fishing seat member) shared that some boat captains have been impacted by strong wind and swells at Santa Rosa Island and San Miguel Island and are not able to get out to fish.
- Sam Macks Franz (Conservation seat member) shared that she enjoyed connecting with her graduate student before the mock council session and expressed the importance of integrating the knowledge and passion of younger generations. She also let council members know that the Conservation Working Group meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2023 and members should reach out to her if they would like to be on the email list.
- Alicia Cordero (Chumash Community seat member) shared that her graduate student did an excellent job of learning about and adopting the perspectives of the Chumash Community during the mock council session. She shared that she received a grant for Reef Check to train 24 low income Chumash youth in scuba diving and Reef Check protocols for monitoring kelp forest ecosystems. This is part of an effort to increase interest and awareness in science careers. If anyone is interested in learning more, they should reach out to Eva Pagaling (Chumash Community seat alternate).
- LTJG Taylor Gibbons (U.S. Coast Guard) provided the coast guard incident briefing which included conducting a multi-agency search operation during the spiny lobster season which resulted in catching a repeat offender in the Footprint Marine Reserve and 58 boardings on commercial and recreational fishing vessels.

Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

CINMS Superintendent, Chris Mobley, welcomed attendees to the Advisory Council meeting and shared the following updates:

- Mobley thanked Giles Pettifor and the Port of Hueneme for providing the board room for the advisory council meeting.
- Mobley shared that on August 31, 2023 a whale entanglement response training occurred aboard the R/V Shearwater. NOAA response experts trained local responders, sanctuary

staff, and vessel crew. The training was coordinated with support from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation in partnership with the National Large Whale Entanglement Response Network, state and federal agency partners, and national marine sanctuaries.

- Mobley shared that 34 whales were recorded on the August 25, 2023 monthly aerial whale survey. This included five blue whales, six fin whales, nine humpback whales, one minke whale, five unidentified whales, and a rare sighting of eight Baird's beaked whales. 24 of the 34 whales were found within the area of the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.
- Mobley shared that on September 14, 2023, 900 lbs of marine debris were removed from a one-mile stretch of coastline at Chinese Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. The trip was conducted in association with California Coastal Cleanup Day, with financial support from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's Clean Seas: Channel Islands Marine Debris Removal initiative, and in partnership with Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.
- Mobley shared that Sanctuary staff and volunteers participated in the annual Santa Barbara Harbor and Seafood Festival on Saturday, October 21, 2023. Members of the Channel Islands Naturalist Corps program staffed an information booth in partnership with Channel Islands National Park to provide information about programs and visiting the sanctuary and park.
- Mobley shared that on October 27, 2023, 45 students and members of the Chumash community gathered at Cabrillo High School Aquarium in Lompoc, California to participate in a live interactive program with scientists aboard the NOAA ship Okeanos Explorer to learn about research underway in the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Participants were introduced to the proposed sanctuary by Laura Ingulsrud, Policy Analyst with West Coast Region Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, followed by a presentation about the NOAA ship Okeanos Explorer from Shellby Johnson, outreach specialist and coordinator with NOAA Office of Exploration and Research.
- Mobley shared that the 10th California Islands Symposium was held in Ventura California from November 6-9, 2023. The symposium provided an important opportunity for key stakeholders, scientists, and managers to discuss and address threats and potential solutions for climate change and warming oceans, introduced species, pollution, and resource extraction on marine and island ecosystems.
- Mobley shared that on October 30-31, Robert "Shipwreck Bob" Schwemmer led his final shipwreck cruise in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary as a federal employee. Bob is retiring from federal service at the end of this year, after serving with NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries since 1997. For all of his passion, devotion, hard work, attention to people, support for the Chumash community, generous contributions of excellent photography, and so much more, we thank and congratulate Bob as he wraps up his federal service career!

Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area

Holly Lohuis, Co-Director of the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area, announced that as of October 20, 2023, the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area was officially designated. She thanked the Advisory Council for the support during the designation process, and for the individual SAC members that wrote letters of support. She shared there is a free, community gathering event to celebrate the designation on November 28, 2023 at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

Overview of the Port of Hueneme Clean Energy Planning Process

Giles Pettifor, Business seat member and Environmental Manager at the Port of Hueneme, welcomed Advisory Council members to the Port and presented a brief overview of the Port's clean energy planning process. He provided an overview of the Port's accomplishments, top exports and imports, and overall performance over the past 10 years. Pettifor then discussed the Port's Zero Energy planning process, which began in 2014, and the overall commitment and funding for decarbonization.

Council member questions and discussion included the following

- One member asked about the broader ramifications of transitioning from oil and gas to a Port that is powered by electricity. They noted that many electric power plants are powered by coal.
 - Pettifor responded that while the State of California is pushing an overall goal for clean energy, it is critical to delve into the specifics of what forms of electricity are the most accessible, affordable, and feasible to power the grid. He acknowledged that there is a power deficit in Coastal California and there are a few gas fired power plants near the Port. He concluded that offshore wind, while challenging, is important because electrical loads are anticipated to grow exponentially along the coast.
- Another council member thanked Giles for his presentation and the work that the Port is doing.

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Keighley Lane, CINMS Program Support Specialist, and Grace Kumiashi, 2023 California Sea Grant Fellow, presented an update on the progress within the Climate Energy Action Plan. On November 1 and 2, 2023, CINMS staff invited experts to participate in a Climate Vulnerability Assessment workshop (CVA). Experts and CINMS staff assessed the vulnerability of 22 species & species groups. Next steps include drafting a report summarizing the findings of the CVA that will be reviewed by volunteers of the CINMS Advisory Council Research Activities Panel and the larger scientific community.

Council member questions and discussion included the following:

- One member asked if invasive species were considered within the assessment.
 - Lane responded that invasive species were addressed as non-climate stressors as applicable, which influences the sensitivity of the selected species. Overall, the presence of an invasive species may increase vulnerability.
- Another council member asked how warmer water temperatures affected fish species like dorado and tuna and if the assessments take this into consideration.
 - Lane responded that climate variations, like marine heat waves, play into the discussions on vulnerability as they affect the food web and migrations.
- A council member asked about assessing bait fish like sardine, and the ability of these assessments to look at the science and compare with anecdotal stories from those that are out on the water.
 - Chris Mobley responded that the NOAA Fisheries will be addressing this topic in their Climate Vulnerability Assessment for the entire California current.

Channel Islands Biosphere Region

Sean Hastings, Resource Protection Specialist, and Kacy Cooper, 2023 CA Sea Grant Fellow, presented on the Channel Islands Biosphere Region, a designation within UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program. They provided a brief history of the Channel Islands Biosphere Region, including the boundary expansion in 2016 to include the mainland communities within Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. They concluded that the biosphere region will undergo a periodic review in 2026 and they are looking to form a steering committee to inform the review.

Council member questions and discussion included the following:

- One member suggested that outreach should be conducted within the Los Angeles region as the diversity and interest in outdoor recreation is directly relevant to the biosphere region.
 - Hastings responded that there are many visitors from Los Angeles to the Channel Islands so there is a benefit to tourism bureaus.
- Another member offered to help facilitate connections in both the marine and terrestrial NGO space.
 - Cooper responded that it would be helpful to connect with more potential terrestrial partners.
- A council member commented that this designation is a great way to establish more partnerships with the local cities and counties.

Public Comment

Members of the public provided the following comments and remarks for guest speakers and sanctuary staff.

- Leslie Percell, shared her appreciation for the Advisory Council and for the supporting the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area.

- A representative of the Pt. Mugu Naval Air Station, asked how the Navy is involved in the Channel Islands Biosphere Region.
 - Sean Hastings responded that it is up to the Navy's interests and he is open to continuing the discussion with the Navy if they are interested in joining the Steering Committee.

Student Seat Discussion

Ken Owen, Public-at-Large Seat Member, Council Secretary, and Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee provided an overview of subcommittee discussions regarding the possibility of creating an advisory council student seat.

Following Owen's presentation, Mike Murray introduced Dawn Hayes, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) Deputy Superintendent, and Josie Wrinkle, MBNMS Student Seat representative and asked them to speak on their experiences with a student seat on the MBNMS Advisory Council. Dawn Hayes shared that the MBNMS Advisory Council includes a non-voting student seat, which is eligible to students in college or graduate school. The council debated also including a non-voting youth seat, but ultimately decided that due to challenges with transportation and participation, to only offer a seat to university students. Josie Wrinkle shared that she appreciates the opportunity to supplement her marine science-focused education with her experience on the council with community engagement and policy.

Council member questions and discussion included the following:

- Council members asked Josie to reflect on her experience as a non-voting council member.
 - Josie shared that so far, the decisions and recommendations of the council have aligned with her interests. She shared it would be helpful to have a mentor to guide her through the policy-focused aspects of the advisory council process.
- A council member asked Josie to speak to her experience with her constituencies and the topics/issues they are most concerned/interested in.
 - She shared her peers are interested in the research conducted within the Sanctuary, particularly regarding kelp restoration.
- Council members discussed considerations for a student seat, which would include college and graduate level students, and whether to also include a youth seat for students in high school.
 - Sam Macks Franz offered a motion for CINMS staff to explore the process and implications of creating both a student seat, for college and graduate students, and a youth seat, for high school students.
 - Ken Owen seconded the motion.

Close Out and Next Steps

- Chair Cohen provided closing remarks and reminded attendees about the upcoming 2024

Advisory Council meetings:

- Friday, January 19 (Santa Barbara County with online option)
- Friday, March 15 (Ventura County with online option)
- Friday, May 17 (Santa Barbara County with online option)
- Friday July 19 (Ventura County with online option)
- Friday, September 20 (Santa Barbara County with online option)
- Friday, November 15 (Ventura County with online option)

Appendix A. Advisory Council hybrid meeting attendance, November 17, 2023

<i>Name</i>	<i>Advisory Council Seat</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
Michael Cohen	Tourism member	Yes
Amanda Allen	Tourism alternate	No
Kaia Kababik	Non-Consumptive Recreation member	No
Molly Troup	Non-Consumptive Recreation alternate	No
Giles Pettifor	Business member	Yes
Jaime Diamond	Business alternate	Yes
Sam Macks Franz	Conservation member	Yes
Christina Tombach Wright	Conservation alternate	Yes
Mike Nelson	Commercial Fishing member	Yes
John Hoadley	Commercial Fishing alternate	No
David Lopez	Recreational Fishing member	Yes
Kevin Brannon	Recreational Fishing alternate	Yes
Michael Yorke	Education member	Yes
Andrea Mills	Education alternate	Yes
Phyllis Grifman	Research member	Yes
Robert Miller, Ph.D.	Research alternate	Yes
Ken Owen	Public-At-Large member	Yes
Chris Ragland	Public At-Large alternate	No
Stuart Kasdin, Ph.D.	Public-At-Large member	Yes
Blake Thomas	Public At-Large alternate	Yes
Alicia Cordero	Chumash Community member	Yes
Eva Pagaling	Chumash Community alternate	No
Daniel Studt	National Marine Fisheries Service member	No
<vacant>	National Marine Fisheries Service alternate	n/a
Ken Convery	National Park Service member	Yes
<vacant>	National Park Service alternate	n/a
CDR Ariel Berrios	U.S. Coast Guard member	Yes
LTJG Taylor Gibbons	U.S. Coast Guard alternate	Yes
Donna Schroeder	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management member	No
Jeremy Potter	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management alternate	No
Adam Melerski	Dept. of Defense member	No
Stephen Duboyce	Dept. of Defense alternate	Yes
Carlos Mireles	California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife member	Yes
Armand Barilotti	California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife alternate	No
Jenn Eckerle	California Natural Resources Agency member	No
Pike Spector	California Natural Resources Agency alternate	No

Cassidy Teufel	California Coastal Commission member	Yes
Jacqueline Phelps	California Coastal Commission alternate	Yes
Errin Briggs	County of Santa Barbara member	Yes
David Villalobos	County of Santa Barbara alternate	Yes
Jed Chernabaeff	County of Ventura member	Yes
<vacant>	County of Ventura alternate	n/a
Lisa Wooninck	Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary member (non-voting)	No
Karen Grimmer	Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary alternate (non-voting)	No
Maria Brown	Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary member (non-voting)	No
Brian Johnson	Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary alternate (non-voting)	No
Chris Mobley	Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary member (non-voting)	Yes
Mike Murray (staff)	Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary alternate (non-voting)	Yes
	Total number of individual SAC members (<u>voting seats only</u>)	26
	Number of voting seats represented (out of 21)	17

Appendix B. Written Council member announcements, submitted as of November 16, 2023

Name: Daniel Studt

Seat: NOAA Fisheries

Announcement: [NOAA Fisheries Releases Updated National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plans](#)

Narrative: NOAA Fisheries has released an [updated National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy](#) and multi-year [national and regional implementation plans](#). They identify actionable commitments to advance our policy goals. Key additions to the goals and principles include: climate change, equity and environmental justice, and greater focus on expanding offshore industries.

Announcement: Grant Opportunities: [Saltonstall-Kennedy](#) and [BREP](#)

Narrative: Proposals for two grant programs are due soon. Proposals are due November 21st for the [Saltonstall-Kennedy \(SK\) grant program](#). The SK program seeks applications related to fisheries promotion and marketing, development, infrastructure, and capacity building, and science or technology that enhances sustainable U.S. fisheries. Pre-proposals are due December

15th for the [Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program \(BREP\)](#). BREP priorities for FY24 include researching new technology, encouraging technology adoption, reducing post-release mortality, avoiding habitat interactions, and conducting international research.

Announcement: [Public comment opportunity on Navy/Marine Mammals](#)

Narrative: NOAA Fisheries published a proposed rule requesting comments and information in response to a request received from the U.S. Navy to modify regulations and Letters of Authorization authorizing the take of marine mammals incidental to Navy training and testing activities conducted in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Test Study Area between 2018 and 2025. Public comments are due no later than November 17, 2023. The proposed rule and public comment portal can be found [here](#).

Name: Jaime Diamond

Seat: Business Alternate

Announcement: **National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plan Round Table**

Narrative: At the most recent Pacific Fisheries Management Council Meeting, Recreational anglers were invited to a round table discussion with NOAA. Recreational fishermen from San Diego to the Oregon border were present. Leading the discussion was Daniel Studt-NOAA Fisheries, Ryan Wulff-NOAA Assistant Regional Manager West Coast-Sustainable Fisheries Division, James Hilger-SWFSC Economist, Dr. Melissa Monk-SWFSC Research & Mathematical Statistician. Participants were able to discuss the National saltwater RecFish policy & implementation plans, ask questions and provide feedback. It was a worthwhile opportunity for all.

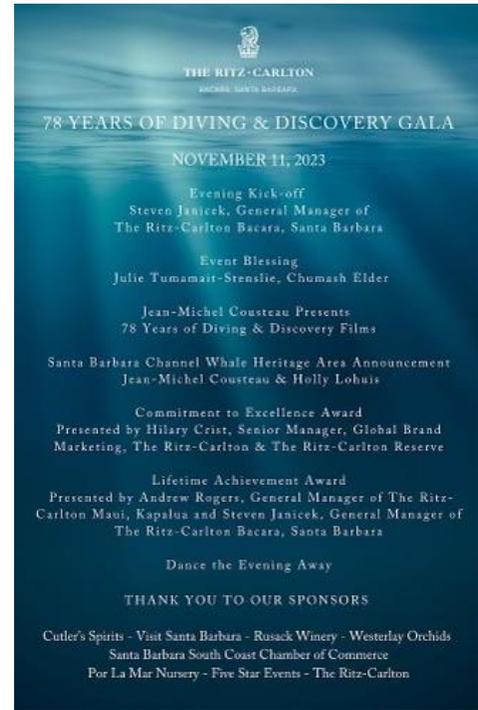


Name: Jaime Diamond

Seat: Business Alternate

Announcement: Jean-Michel Cousteau Ocean Futures Society celebrates 78 years of Diving & Discovery Gala

Narrative: On Saturday November 11 at the Ritz Carlton Bacara, people gathered to celebrate the life & work of Jean-Michel Cousteau and OFS. The evening began with a beautiful blessing from Chumash Elder Julie Tumamait-Stenslie. Jean-Michel Cousteau, turning 85 in May 2023, is filming a new TV series, “Jean-Michel Cousteau’s 77 Years of Diving and Discovery,” and the first episode will focus on whales in the Northern Pacific and is titled “A Great Message of Hope.” Business representatives from across the county and country were present, and especially focused on our beautiful SB Channel & Islands through the lens of JMC. The New Santa Barbara Whale Heritage Area Designation was also celebrated with a video message and showcasing the partner/sponsors, many of whom are local businesses and even a local school Canalino from Carpinteria.



Announcement subject: Santa Barbara Whale Heritage Area Designation!!

Relevant links: [YouTube Video](#) [Noozhawk](#) [SB Indy](#)

Narrative: October 20, 2023: Santa Barbara, CA- The World Cetacean Alliance and the World Animal

Protection are pleased to announce the designation of the 9th Whale Heritage (Site) Area in the world, and the only 2nd Whale Heritage Area in the United States, the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area (SBCWHA). This designation highlights the region’s commitment to promoting responsible ecotourism, providing more ocean educational opportunities, supporting on-going research and conservation efforts, and honoring the timeless cultural connection we have to whales. Together these two organizations have launched a new global program, Wildlife Heritage Areas, as the larger initiative to support a coalition of responsible travel businesses with wildlife conservation.

Name: Carlos Mireles

Seat: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Announcement: **Update on the CA Fish and Game Commission Process to Consider Potential Changes to California’s Marine Protected Area Network**

Relevant links: [Overview of Process Document to Consider Potential Changes Petitions for Regulation Change \(with link to Form FGC-1\)](#)

Narrative: The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) is engaged in an adaptive management process for California’s marine protected area (MPA) network and management program based on [adaptive management recommendations](#) from the first comprehensive [decadal management review](#) (DMR) of the network and management program. The Commission recently released an [overview](#) of the process for submitting public petitions for changes to the MPA network. CDFW recommends that petitioners use this overview document to develop their proposals.

The estimated timeline for the petition consideration process is as follows:

November 30, 2023	SUBMIT PETITIONS: Written comments deadline is *preferred* due date
December 12-13, 2023	RECEIPT at Commission meeting
February 14-15, 2024	ACTION at Commission meeting – Commission may <i>grant</i> , <i>deny</i> , or <i>refer</i> for CDFW review
March, July, and/or November 2024 (TBD)	MRC discussion when CDFW evaluations are ready
TBD	Commission receipt/action of MRC and CDFW recommendations

Petitions can be submitted via email to: fgc@fgc.ca.gov

Questions should be directed to: fgc@fgc.ca.gov or call (916) 653-4899

Name :Ken Convery

Seat: Channel Islands National Park

Announcement: NPS Kelp Forest Monitoring Program

Narrative: In 2023, the Kelp Forest Monitoring Program (KFMP) conducted 812 dives cumulatively spending 50,408 minutes underwater surveying 33 permanent transects across the 5 park islands in 2023. We observed a decline in giant kelp across all islands this year likely due to anomalously warm seawater. The park will again be hiring seasonal biological technicians for the 2024 year. Please spread the word to the talented and qualified.

Photos: Santa Barbara Island MPA. Photo credits: NPS/Scotty Gabara

