

CINMS CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP
9/19/12 REPORT
Environmental Defense Center Conference Room,
906 Garden Street, Santa Barbara

Present: Linda Krop, Chair (EDC), Kristi Birney (EDC), Debra Herring, Vic Cox, Christine Ryerson (Jim Ryerson Environmental Fdn), Kiya Gornik (Bren School), Michael Smith (Gray Whales Count), Timothy Lin (Bren School)

Staff: Sara Hutto, Mike Murray

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

- A. CINMS/EDC Bren School group project: Kiya provided a report on the progress of the project. The group has been evaluating the available data and seeking additional data as necessary. They recently received the last data they need to create their model.

III. WHALES & SHIPPING

- A. PARS/IMO: the IMO subcommittee recommended moving the Santa Barbara Channel TSS to help protect whales from ship strikes. The Marine Safety Committee will make a final decision at its meeting November 26-30, 2012.
- B. 2012 Season Update: The Notice to Mariners recommending 10-knot speed limit was withdrawn due to scarcity of whales; the Whale Advisory Zone still exists, however, so if whale sightings increase, the Notice will be re-sent. Natalie will provide a report regarding the level of cooperation with recommended speed reductions at the SAC meeting. CINMS staff is also contacting the shipping industry directly, asking for interest in issue, and has received some positive responses.

The CWG will wait to review the results at the end of the 2012 season to determine whether we may recommend reconvening the SAC subcommittee or establishing a working group to discuss further options and strategies.

- C. APCD – John Calambokidis presentation: Kristi, Mike and Sara attended a meeting hosted by the SBC APCD. John is conducting research regarding whale behavior near cargo ships. Although the data set is small, he has noticed that blue whales dive shallower when ships are nearby, and that the whales float and drift close to the surface at night. John still supports separating whales from ships geographically as well as slowing ships down. He also supports the Joint Working Group report from the Gulf of Farallones/Cordell Banks NMS's, in particular the recommendations for

real time sightings and the two-year voluntary period (with changes to mandatory requirements if necessary).

IV. SAC CAMPAIGN OF ENGAGEMENT

- A. SAC Subcommittee: The subcommittee met on Sept 10 to discuss strategies to raise awareness about the Sanctuary. The group discussed their experiences and brainstormed some ideas for marketing strategies. They will meet again in October.

Christine reported that she asked if Island Packers could make Island trips a couple days a week from Santa Barbara. Island access from Santa Barbara could help enhance Sanctuary and Park visibility and experience. Another option would be to grant an additional concession in Santa Barbara. Mike said that the Subcommittee may request a presentation by the National Park Service to discuss Island access.

V. OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

- A. West Coast Action Plan implementation: a progress report was provided at the West Coast SAC Chairs meeting. Highlights include education (upcoming workshop – see Item V.B.), research/monitoring (conducting survey to inventory existing efforts on the West Coast), and the PSA. Bruce gave a great overview of the issue. In response, Bill Douros implored all sites to make this issue a priority at SAC meetings.
- B. National Marine Sanctuaries and Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute “Effective Practices for Ocean Acidification (OA) Communication and Education Workshop” Sept 27-28, 2012: Kristi will attend and share our OA PSA toolkit to encourage others to help distribute the PSA. The Conference will focus on developing messaging strategies and networking. Vic suggested focusing attention on iconic species such as whales, as a means to generate more public interest. Kristi noted that we are also focusing on effects on people (e.g. loss of food sources) in order to garner more attention and interest.
- C. EDC Public Service Announcement (PSA): see Item V.B. above. Kristi will attempt to network and enhance our distribution opportunities while attending the Workshop.
- D. Alert re hypoxic conditions in Washington and Oregon: Bruce Steele will provide a presentation to the SAC regarding hypoxic conditions and how they relate to ocean acidification.

VI. OTHER ISSUES

- A. West Coast SAC Chairs Summit Aug 30-31: in addition to the discussion regarding ocean acidification (see Item V.A.), there were discussions regarding relationships with the fishing industry (recommendation to

acknowledge local/regional fishing issues and trends, and success stories), developing/sharing lists of priorities, and the Site Evaluation List.

- B. SAC Chairs conference call Aug 30: There was a discussion about tourism and campaign of engagement. Topics included tourism activities, why it is important, and examples of successful programs. Participants raised concerns about affecting the wilderness feel of the Sanctuary. The group also discussed promoting what people *can* do vs. talking about what you can't do. There was an emphasis on what you can do.
- C. SAC Speakers series: As part of the SAC speakers series there will be two presentations at this SAC meeting. Carol Blanchette (UCSB/MSI) will speak about her work regarding the monitoring of baseline conditions at coastal MPAs before implementation of the MLPA; Chris Lowe (CSULB) will speak about his work regarding MPAs and applicability to top level predators in the ecosystem. Oak Park High School students will join Chris to talk about a project they have collaborated on with him.
- D. Sanctuary Classic Report: The event ended September 3rd and scholarship winners were selected. Two of the winners are from the Santa Barbara Channel. During Friday's SAC meeting we will get an update on the event and learn what the plans are for next year.

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