

## NOAA Marine Debris Program FY16 Budget Proposal Template

1. **Date of Request:** August 31, 2015
2. **Proposal Title:** Lobster Trap Loss Prevention & Recovery Pilot Project  
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS)
3. **Name of NOAA Marine Debris Program POC:** Sherry Lippiatt
4. **Point of Contact (names and contact information):**  
CINMS Staff:  
Sean Hastings – Resource Protection Coordinator, [Sean.Hastings@noaa.gov](mailto:Sean.Hastings@noaa.gov)  
Julie Bursek – Education Team Lead, [Julie.Bursek@noaa.gov](mailto:Julie.Bursek@noaa.gov)
5. **MDP Strategic Plan Goal, Objective, and Strategy (if possible) This Project Relates to:**  
**Goal 4 (Prevention), Objective 2:** Reduce or eliminate one region-specific debris issue or type in 4 regions as a result of increased awareness.
  - Strategy 4: Develop awareness campaigns around each specific debris issue or type supported by outreach and educational materials and activities.**Goal 5 (Research), Objective 3:** Assess and promote management and restoration options to reduce the impacts of marine debris.
  - Strategy 1: MDP research results in at least 1 fishery adopting a new technology, gear design or practice to minimize gear loss or impact.

This project also directly supports the WCGA Marine Debris Action Coordination Team Marine Debris Strategy: **Derelict Fishing Gear / Action 1. Build strong partnerships with the fishing industry, management agencies and relevant maritime entities to identify and practice DFG prevention, reduction and appropriate removal measures.**

### 6. Description

A NOAA Marine Debris grant would support a pilot project in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS or sanctuary) to: determine the extent and affects of lost lobster gear; in partnership with the lobster fishery develop and communicate a suite of best fishery management practices to prevent the loss of lobster gear; and based on lessons learned in the pilot project propose ways in which to scale up a lobster trap loss prevention and recovery program.

CINMS will implement the pilot project in partnership with lobstermen, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Channel Islands National Park, existing marine debris removal programs and the CINMS Advisory Council.

The sanctuary has long supported marine debris removal both in the sanctuary and along the mainland coast. CINMS has sponsored, hosted and participated in beach cleanups at

island and mainland beaches in association with the annual Coastal Cleanup Day, endorsed and provided sanctuary permits to the Sea Doc Society's California Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Project and the Ocean Defender's Alliance to remove lost gear from sanctuary waters. A logical evolution is to prevent the sources of marine debris, in this case, loss of lobster gear.

## **7. Statement of need**

The proposed pilot project is needed to reduce impacts on State and sanctuary marine resources and to influence future fishery practices in the spiny lobster fishery. Based on years of marine debris removal efforts, lobster gear is one of the major sources of marine debris both in sanctuary waters and on parklands. There is documented evidence of the habitat damage and impacts on wildlife from lost lobster gear, e.g. ghost fishing, by-catch and wildlife entanglement.

CDFW is preparing a Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan (FMP) with input from the public and a Lobster Advisory Committee. Trap limits (e.g. 300 traps per fisherman) and a trap tagging system similar to the Dungeness crab fishery are being considered. Trap tagging is one way to facilitate tracking of the number of traps being fished, lost, and returned to fishermen. In 2016, the California Fish and Game Commission will discuss and possibly adopt the FMP and proposed regulations. The FMP and regulations would be effective for the 2017/18 lobster season. The lobster fishing community has an incentive to participate in this pilot project in order to positively influence the implementation of the future lobster trap tagging program.

## **8. Objectives**

1. Sustain a multi-community based partnership to systematically address the lost lobster gear in CINMS.
2. Guide a controlled and precise shoreline removal program and ensure that retrieved lobster gear is disposed and/or returned appropriately;
3. Work with the lobster fishery to develop advice, recommendations and best fishery management practices (BMPs) to prevent and/or reduce lobster trap loss;
4. Communicate the affects of loss fishing gear to the general ocean public
5. Educate lobstermen in BMP
6. Effectively reduce the impacts of lost lobster gear on the marine environment.

### **Tasks**

- Determine the current fishery practices that lead to the loss of lobster traps.
- Formulate an accurate evaluation of the quantity and likely environmental affects of lost lobster gear by reviewing and spatially analyzing historic data on lost and recovered lobster traps within CINMS.
- Pick 2 to 3 field sites e.g. Smuggler's Cove and Chinese Harbor, Santa Cruz Island
- Engage lobstermen in surveys, planning sessions of operation field plans, and executing the fieldwork.

- Host meetings with lobstermen to develop best fishery management practices to prevent and/or reduce loss of lobster traps, adopting lessons learned from Strategic Earth Consulting's work with the California Dungeness Crab Fishery Task Force
- Shoreline Assessment and Cleanups
  - Pick 2 to 3 field sites, e.g. Smuggler's Cove, Santa Cruz Island
  - Engage lobstermen in on water surveys
  - Monitor and track lobster traps in the water and on island shorelines
  - Support up to 4 shoreline cleanups in the pilot project area
- Continue to support the SeaDoc Society and Ocean Defenders Alliance in water lost trap recovery
- Produce a Thank You Ocean Podcast, and other social media, to highlight project to the general ocean community to raise awareness of collaborative effort.
- Develop and Deliver Presentations and Briefings to: Ocean Protection Council, California Fish and Game Commission, lobstermen and various community groups.
- Project write up and dissemination to:
  - Ocean Protection Council (OPC)
  - CA Lobster and Trap Fishermen's Association
  - Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council
  - Sanctuaries Conservation Series (or similar publication)
- Submit final report to MDP

## 9. Outcomes

In advance of the 2017/2018 lobster season and FMP implementation:

- Delivery to CDFW, the Ocean Protection Council, and CA Fish and Game Commission a suite of Best Fishery Management Practices to prevent loss and facilitate recovery;
- Recommendations on scaling pilot project statewide

### Benefits

- Strengthening relationship with lobster fishing community.
- Removal of lost lobster traps will reduce future by-catch of lobsters and other marine species, wildlife entanglements and habitat damage.
- Effective implementation of FMP and likely trap tagging program.

## 10. Project Timeline

- **January 2016 – May 2016** (2<sup>nd</sup> half and end of lobster season): Engage lobster fishermen to develop pilot, preliminary BMP and draft outreach products.
- **May 2016-Sept. 2016** – refine BMPs and conduct outreach
- **October 2016 - March 2017** - implement and evaluate BMPs

## 11. Partnerships

- California Lobster and Trap Fishermen's Association

- Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (project endorsement expected at Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, Council includes fishing representatives)
- Channel Islands National Park Service
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- The SeaDoc Society
- Ocean Defenders Alliance
- Strategic Earth Consulting

## 12. Budget

a) **Total Requested:** \$48,500

b) **Proposed Funding Mechanism:** BOP / internal transfer to CINMS

c) **Is project scalable?** Yes, if needed.

d) **Itemized Budget Table**

Description	Total
Planning, Coordination and Execution of Meetings with Fishing Community	\$7,500
Development, production and dissemination of outreach materials, such as a Thank You Ocean Podcast	\$10,000
Shoreline Assessment and Cleanups (4 days vessel/crew time)	\$20,000
Staff* – California Sea Grant Fellow (~20% time); CINMS already selected as 2016 Sea Grant Host Site	\$8,500
Travel Support - (2 to 3 trips within California to highlight pilot project)	\$2,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$48,500</b>

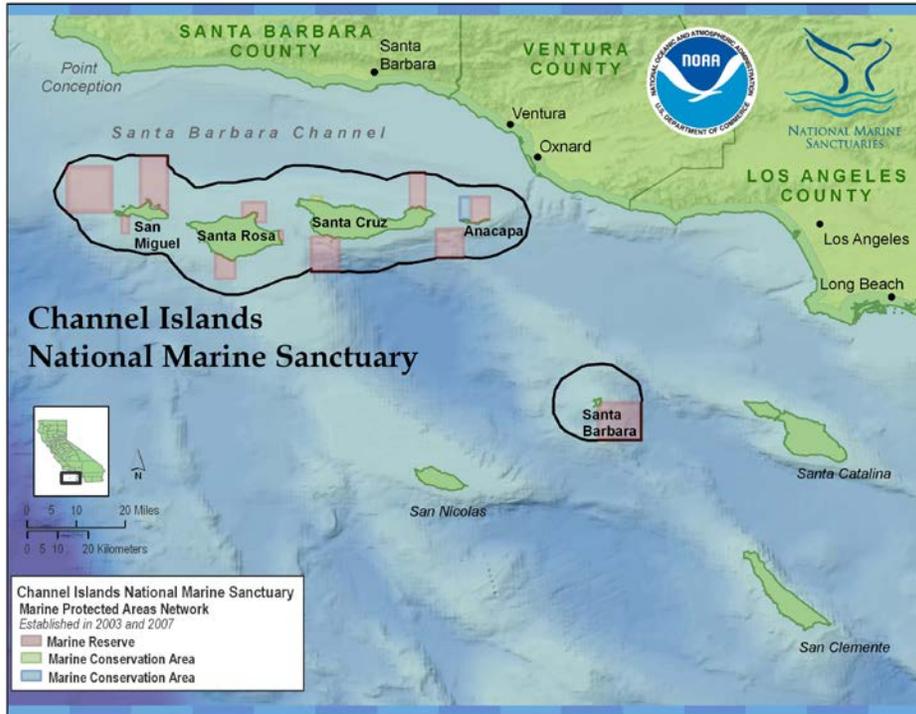
e) **In-Kind Support:** \*Two senior sanctuary staff will serve as the project coordinators, providing oversight and guidance to the Sea Grant Fellow, and any required permits, e.g. sanctuary permit, beach landing and access permits. Approximately 10% FTE time, valued at ~ \$24,500.

**13. Geographic Area:** All field activities will be conducted within CINMS boundaries, likely focus area Santa Cruz Island.

a) **Do you need permits to conduct your activity?** As mentioned above, Sanctuary staff will coordinate sanctuary, beach landing, and access permits.

b) **Are you aware of any environmental compliance issues or concerns?** No expected compliance issues with the trap survey and removal activities.

c) **Include map of area (if applicable):**



#### 14. Supplementary Materials

Photos of Lobster Traps recovered during the Santa Barbara Adventure Company's Spring Channel Islands 2015 cleanup

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sbadventureco/sets/72157651135468115/>):



