
Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Sanctuary Superintendent's Report

January 2016

A report for the Sanctuary Advisory Council

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Sanctuary Superintendent's Report highlights recent accomplishments and activities from program areas at the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS or sanctuary). This report will also be available online at channelislands.noaa.gov.

Bilateral exchange on environmental regulation of shipping industry

During the week of November 16-20, ONMS was host to a delegation from Sweden's Agency for Marine and Water Management (SWAM) and the Swedish Geological Survey. Urged by the European Union, Sweden is undertaking a marine spatial planning process to strategically identify areas within Swedish waters appropriate for the wide array of activities occurring there. Aware of ONMS' leadership in both marine planning and working with key constituents such as shipping, Swedish officials reached out to ONMS to learn from our experiences and to highlight theirs. The delegation spent time in both Santa Barbara, CA with CINMS and Silver Spring, MD with ONMS Headquarters and staff phoning in from Stellwagen Bank NMS. ONMS experiences with alterations to shipping traffic, as well as the vessel speed reduction trial were key highlights of the dialogue. Additional topics that were part of the conversation included: ballast water control, leakages from wrecks, and cumulative impact analysis.

Channel Islands Sanctuary Advisory Council Mentors UCSB Bren Students and Hosts Mock Student Council Session

In November 2015, members of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council paired up with graduate students enrolled in a Coastal and Ocean Policy and Management course at UCSB's Bren School of Environmental Science and Management. Each participating council member was interviewed by a graduate student, who then served as their proxy in a "mock" student council session hosted on November 20th in Ventura at the council's regularly scheduled public meeting. The students used insight they had gained from talking with council members to play the roles of various stakeholders. The mock scenario that the students engaged in was focused on the use of unmanned technology in the sanctuary and park. A similar

ABOUT THE SANCTUARY

Designated in 1980, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary consists of an area off the coast of California of approximately 1,470 square miles adjacent to the following islands and offshore rocks: San Miguel Island, Santa Rosa Island, Santa Cruz Island, Anacapa Island, Santa Barbara Island, Richardson Rock, and Castle Rock, extending seaward to a distance of approximately six nautical miles. The islands vary in distance from 12 to 40 nautical miles offshore from Santa Barbara and Ventura counties in southern California. A fertile combination of warm and cool currents in this area results in a great variety of plants and animals including kelp forests, fish, invertebrates, marine mammals and sea birds. The sanctuary also contains a wealth of maritime heritage resources including Chumash Native American artifacts and over 100 historic shipwrecks. Human uses in the area include commercial and recreational fishing, marine wildlife viewing, boating, diving, kayaking, Chumash maritime and cultural practices, maritime shipping, nearby offshore oil and gas development, research and monitoring, and numerous educational activities. Sanctuary staff coordinate research, monitoring, education, outreach, emergency response, and community involvement programs, as well as the enforcement of regulations, to promote long term resource protection and compatible human use within the sanctuary.

exercise was conducted for each of the past two years, and once again it was a nice success. Students had the chance to engage in a real world public policy forum, and to connect with actual coastal community stakeholders. Their comments at the meeting reflected that they had done their “homework” on community issues and views, and their participation was focused and engaging. Students also drafted a meeting summary to report back to their assigned council members.

EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND VOLUNTEERS

Signs made by MERITO Academy Students Unveiled during Dedication Ceremony of Ormond Beach

On November 7, the Ventura County Public Works Agency’s Watershed Protection District (WPD) and distinguished officials held a public dedication ceremony at Ormond Beach in Oxnard, California. The ceremony celebrated a successful watershed awareness campaign, a historic public selection of new names for two WPD channels, and the unveiling of six signs developed by students participating in the Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans (MERITO) Academy in 2014-2015. The signs resulted from field studies by 450 students from the region, who learned about local endemic and endangered species of Ormond Beach, and created content and art to educate the public about these species, and about how to prevent urban runoff and marine debris. The California Coastal Conservancy sponsored the students’ field studies. The MERITO Foundation selected content, art and messages from over 500 students essays, posters and presentations and developed six signs using NOAA ONMS best practices with support from Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. After Chumash representatives from the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians blessed the site and canals, Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long, City of Oxnard Mayor Pro Tem Carmen Ramirez, and WPD Director Tully Clifford spoke about the need to provide more attention and care to Ormond Beach and to inform the public about its natural and fragile resources, while also acknowledging the work done by MERITO students as impactful to raise awareness.

MERITO Foundation launches Energy Efficiency Program to Mitigate Climate Change and Ocean Acidification “EECCOA” with High School Teacher Training on Climate Literacy

On November 13, nine High School and upper Middle School teachers from Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Oxnard, and Fillmore in Southern California were trained on and received Chapter 1 of the *Energy Efficiency to Mitigate Climate Change and Ocean Acidification* “EECCOA” activity guide, focused on Climate Science as phase 1 of 3. EECCOA is a unique project-based education program that integrates climate, energy and ocean literacy on an Earth-System approach. The goal of the program is to provide energy, climate and ocean literacy services and products for 7th – 12th grade teachers and their students, aligned to current academic standards, and to empower students to address climate change and ocean acidification. EECCOA will provide them the tools to research, design and innovate energy efficiency or other sustainability models that their schools can adopt to reduce carbon footprint, or to develop Ocean Acidification awareness campaigns that inform their communities. The nine teachers also received an outstanding lecture by Meteorologist John Dumas, Science and Operations Officer with NOAA’s National Weather Service office in Oxnard. Dr. Dumas’ office staff will also give a presentation to the 485 students of the participating teachers within the next 2 months, and MERITO Foundation staff will be demonstrating Earth systems using a NOAA 3-D portable spherical display known as the ‘Magic Planet’ to each of the 15 school classes. The next workshop days are scheduled for February 4 and 5, 2016 and will focus on energy and ocean literacy. The EECCOA Pilot program is partially funded by a NOAA B-WET grant.

RESEARCH, MONITORING AND VESSEL OPERATIONS

CINMS Divers Complete the West Coast Observations Project for 2015

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary has been supporting monitoring efforts around the islands with the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO) since 2000. This includes the West Coast Observations Project, which hosts a series of moorings in the sanctuary that deploy scientific equipment including acoustic receivers that record the movements of tagged fishes, temperature probes, and current monitors. CINMS divers regularly maintain and download data at all of the moorings, and they completed these duties for 2015 during a trip on the R/V Shearwater in December. This effort ensures that the environmental monitoring that has been conducted over 15 years will continue with little disruption. The West Coast Observations Project is important to sustaining local academic research partnerships that help CINMS staff make informed resource protection decisions. In order to expand the reach of West Coast Observations data, CINMS has recently joined the Southern California Acoustic Telemetry Tracking Network (SCATTN). SCATTN is a partnership of researchers tagging fishes using acoustic technology with the goal of leveraging existing acoustic telemetry arrays in the Southern California Bight. Using this newly established network, researchers and CINMS can understand the connectivity of the sanctuary in a regional context. This can inform CINMS managers on how to better protect highly mobile species in the sanctuary and understand the role of the Channel Islands habitat in a regional context.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

Grounded Vessels removed from Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary

Two grounded vessels were recently successfully removed from rocky shorelines of Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Channel Islands National Park. The 18-foot pleasure craft *Swift* was removed by Vessel Assist on November 11th from a cobble shoreline at Chinese Harbor on Santa Cruz Island. The salvage response took about 10 days to launch given delays by the owner and his insurance company. On the third attempt over 12 days, the 51-foot squid fishing vessel *Angels Gate* was successfully pulled off of a rock shelf on November 13th at Skunk Point on Santa Rosa Island and towed back to Ventura Harbor for repairs. These accidents are part of an unusually high number of groundings and distressed vessels that have taken place recently, with a total of six incidents in the sanctuary over two months.

Marine Shipping Working Group convenes for final meeting to finalize recommendations addressing regional shipping-related issues

On January 7, 2016, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council's Marine Shipping Working Group (MSWG) convened in Oxnard for their final in-person meeting. The diverse group of stakeholders has met five times over the past year to develop recommendations to address regional shipping-related concerns including ship strikes on endangered whales, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, navigational safety concerns, and conflicts with naval operations. The working group consists of representatives from the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Exchange of Southern California, shipping industry, air pollution control district, and the tourism, research and conservation communities. At the most recent meeting, the working group members addressed some outstanding questions, voiced their levels of support for various components of the recommendations, and discussed the structure of the final advice packet that will be forwarded to the Sanctuary Advisory Council at the March 2016 council meeting.

Sanctuary Staff

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Shauna Bingham – *Volunteer Program & Outreach Coordinator*
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Claire Fackler – *West Coast Education Liaison*
Sarah Marquis – *West Coast Media Coordinator*
Matt Pickett – *M4 Consulting, Inc; Operations Director, ONMS Center of Excellence for Unmanned Technologies*

Learn More About Your Sanctuary

This report is produced in conjunction with every other bi-monthly Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting. To learn more about the sanctuary please visit our web site at: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov>. To learn more about the Sanctuary Advisory Council please visit: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/sac/welcome.html>.

Follow CINMS

on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ChannelIslandsNMS>) and Twitter (https://twitter.com/noaa_cinms)

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)

The National Marine Sanctuary System consists of 14 marine protected areas that encompass more than 170,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington State to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The system includes 13 national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The ONMS, which manages the system, was established under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act of 1972. Visit the ONMS web site at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/>.

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Sign up for the CINMS listserv to receive email notices about upcoming sanctuary events, and public meetings of the Sanctuary Advisory Council and its working groups: <http://channelislands.noaa.gov/focus/list.html>

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